"DON'T SHARE IT," pleads a teenage nursing student who was videotaped while being gang-raped in Cavite. The video is now circulating in cyberspace. (Story in Metro, Page A11)

NEWS / A5
3 oil firms roll back , gas price by P1/liter today

NEWS / A3
Wife of suspect in RCBC rob-murder says husband only 'fall guy'

WORLD / A20
Richest countries pledge action on food, oil prices

BUSINESS / B1
Gov't to spend P55B on farm sector for rice self-sufficiency by 2013

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Thursday, July 10, 2008 ★★ 7 sections / Vol. 23 / No. 214 P10 website: www.inquirer.net

G-8 summit not as green as can be

HOKKAIDO, JAPAN—At the Group of Eight (G-8) summit, you can go for a spin in a hydrogen-fueled Mazda or tour a home powered by solar panels and a wind turbine. And don't forget to

G-8 SUMMIT: A8

Higher fares demanded

Gov't turns down transport sector: Hike enough for now

By Riza T. Olchondra

ALTHOUGH THE NEW ROUND OF FARE INCREASES HAS yet to take effect, transport groups said yesterday the fare hike was not enough and want more fare adjustments but Malacañang quickly thumbed down their demand.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said yesterday that the approved 50-centavo increase in the minimum fare for passenger jeepneys was enough for the meantime.

The Pagkakaisa ng mga Samahan ng Tsuper at Operator Nationwide (Piston) said it would file another petition for a nationwide fare increase of P1.50.

"While we welcome the approval of our previous petition ... this is not enough because diesel was only P46 per liter when we filed our petition on Oct. 26, 2007," Piston spokesperson George San Mateo said in a text message.

He said diesel, which already costs P54.48 a liter, may go up by P10 per liter this weekend based on pre-announcements made by oil companies and Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes.

Homer Mercado, president of the Provincial Bus Operators of the Philippines (PBOAP), said bus groups would also "most likely" ask for an additional P1.50 increase in the minimum fare if the price of diesel rose by P10 a liter.

"If it (rise in diesel price) goes beyond P10, we will be forced to ask for another increase," said Ilong Bautista, president of the Philippine National Taxi Operators Association (PNTOA).

The energy secretary favors a one-time increase in the price of fuel

HIGHER FARES: A8

HOLD ON FOR DEAR LIFE Saving on transport fare may be hazardous to the health of this father and child on a motorcycle without helmets in Barangay Holy Spirit, Quezon City. Note that the child is not exactly hanging on to something solid enough to keep her from falling off. Which surely is some kind of metaphor of the state of the poor and middle-class Filipinos. The big picture is that the Filipino is riding on the edge. GLEN SORA

DOJ will not allow Sulpicio to abandon ship to insurer

By Christian V. Esguerra and Leila B. Salaverria

THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE CAPsized MV Princess of the Stars would become a "ghost ship" with hundreds of people entombed inside it for years was raised yesterday at the House of Representatives. But Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said he would not allow this to happen.

Gonzalez said that Sulpicio Lines, operator of the ill-fated ferry, could not simply abdicate its responsibility for the tragedy to its insurer, as its lawyer declared on Tuesday.

"The Department of Justice believes that Sulpicio Lines has no moral or legal right to exercise the right of abandonment," he said.

The statutory right of abandonment, Gonzalez said, is limited by the people's constitutional right to a balanced and healthful ecology "and it therefore cannot be exercised to limit or avoid

DOJ WILL: A8

De la Paz ties to GMA foes led to 'removal'

By Dexter L. Lanzo

MALACAÑANG'S DECISION TO "REmove" Corazon de la Paz from the helm of the Social Security System (SSS) was due to her close ties to the Makati Business Club (MBC) and groups critical of the Arroyo administration.

This was according to a ranking government official working closely with state financial institutions, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak on the issue.

"There were just too many issues," the official said, referring to De la Paz's dealings with outgoing administration groups and organizations. "I think she's too closely identified with the Makati Business Club and even the Black and White Movement."

"Just last week, there was another," the official added, although he declined to specify what the last straw was that prompted De la Paz's replacement by

DE LA PAZ: A8

'Over the P26M in Jamby aunt's will can go to other heirs'

By DJ Yap and Ed C. Cabuenagan Jr.

SEN. MARIA ANA CONSUELO "JAMBY" Madrigal yesterday claimed "partial but substantial" victory in the legal tussle over the fortune left by her billionaire aunt, Consuelo "Chito" Madrigal-Collantes, whose last will and testament she is disputing.

Judge Oscar Pimentel of the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 148 has ruled that the bulk of Collantes' estate, or that which was not specified in her will, would be distributed to all her legal

OVER THE P26M: A8

New crop of officers reject failed 'Palparan solution'

By Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

QUINAPONDAN, EASTERN SAMAR —A top military officer admitted on Tuesday that the "Palparan solution" did not help any in solving the country's communist insurgency problem.

Lt. Gen. Pedro De Leserio, commanding general of the AFP Central Command, was referring to retired Army Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, who became controversial for instigating an all-out war against the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, New People's Army (NPA).

Hundreds of alleged extrajudicial killings and human rights abuses took place in areas where Palparan was assigned.

"Nothing came out with this Palparan solution. Look at him, he has long retired from the service yet he is still being hounded by allegations of human rights abuses," Leserio said.

Leserio mentioned the "Palparan solution" several times in his talks with the 801st Infantry Brigade commander, Brig. Gen. Francis Lainsas, other military officials and five town

NEW CROP: A6

Mobile court resolves 20 cases in one day

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE DECISIONS CAME DOWN swiftly yesterday from judges presiding at the first hearings of a justice-on-wheels program outside the jampacked Manila City Jail.

In less than 15 minutes, the charge of robbery-holdup against Aldrich dela Cruz, 20, was provisionally dismissed by Judge Reynaldo Rus after the accuser failed to heed repeated summonses to appear in court since the alleged crime happened in December 2007.

Chief Justice Reynato Puno and Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim were present during the initial proceedings inside a bus that was converted into a courtroom, marking the launching of the mobile court program in Metro Manila.

MOBILE: A6

SPECIAL DELIVERY Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim and Chief Justice Reynato Puno launch the Justice on Wheels bus where court hearings will be held on site to fast-track the delivery of justice, especially for the youth and the elderly. It's the first solid step taken by the Supreme Court after its workshop on improving access to justice. ERIK ALCASID

Ringing phone, weeping maid, a friend in deed

By Nikotchka Rosca
Correspondent

NEW YORK—THE US IMMIGRATION and Citizenship Services issued a T (for trafficking) visa last year to the Filipino woman who has sued Ambassador Lauro Baja Jr. and three others for trafficking, forced labor, peonage and racketeering.

The immediate family members of the woman, Marichu Suarez Bautista, were given T visa derivatives.

Because it is an avenue to permanent residency, the T visa is one of the most difficult to obtain. The quota is 5,000 a year, but only 1,000 were issued in its first three years of availability.

The requirements are quite strin-

RINGING: A6

JUST A FACE IN THE CROWD Housemaid Marichu Bautista is described as "quite typical and could be hidden in plain sight."

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

EZ2 FOUR DIGIT

9 11 3 8 5 2

SUERTRES

4 6 9 5 9 4

9 4 5

MEGALOTTO 6/45

6 10 11 13 15 30

P4,558,073.40

Adaza turns tables on accuser

By Alcuin Papa

FORMER ASSEMBLYMAN AND OPPOSITION lawyer Homobono Adaza turned the tables on his accuser yesterday and blasted the Arroyo administration for allegedly prosecuting members of the opposition.

Adaza, who was arrested last week along with four others for allegedly plotting a coup, accused lawyer Raymund Fortun as the one who was involved in the alleged destabilization.

He said that Fortun had asked him how much it would take to launch a coup to topple down administration.

Fortun had accused Adaza and four other military and police officers, of a "proposal to commit coup d'etat." Fortun said Adaza tried to extort $6 million from his Japanese client to fund the alleged coup.

"I charge my accusers with conspiracy with the rotten administration in manufacturing cases against me in a desperate effort to perpetuate the continuing unstoppable disaster of fear in this country so every one will be terrified and subdued," Adaza said.

Adaza disclosed that when he met Fortun on May 27, it was the latter who told him "there was an ongoing plan to pull a coup by known personalities with active officers in the military. I thought this was a joke but when he asked me how much did I think it would cost to pull a coup, I thought it was serious."

He also laughed off accusations he was out to launch a coup, saying it "is not only ridiculous, it is absolutely false." How can a lawyer with four retired colonels plan to pull a coup."

Adaza said Fortun also wanted his two Filipino businessmen liquidated in order the noodles between the two and his client over their resort project.

But Fortun laughed off Adaza's accusations.

ADAZA: How much would a coup cost?

"Atty. Adaza and God knows their accusations has no basis," Fortun said. "I have no track record for being part of any destabilization moves. I don't know any military officers nor am I going around meeting military officers."

On the alleged plot, Fortun said Adaza should have filed a complaint with authorities. "The records show they had not filed any blotter of any threat made by me against anyone."

Adaza was arrested on July 1 in a hotel in the Ortigas area together with Lt. Col. Dicio Mapalo, Major Supt. Rafael Cardiello and retired Cols. Efrain Ambuy and Cirso dela Rama. They were charged with a "proposal to commit coup d'etat," extortion or swindling, and obstruction of justice.

Adaza said he was being prosecuted for handling the cases of arrested critics of the administration like Sen. Antonio Trillanes, the Magdalo group, Marine Col. Ariel Querubin and former SSS deputy chief Samuel Ong.

MILF attacked 40 times in 2 months—Yano

THE NONPARTISAN MOMO Islamic Liberation Front is responsible for 40 incidents of ambuscades, harassment and sabotage in just two months this year, said Armed Forces Chief Gen. Alexander Yano.

The AFP will take an "active defense posture" against the MILF that is a very fluid world unless the peace process, Yano said in a speech at the Manila Overseas Press Club (MOPC) late Tuesday.

Yano stressed that the AFP's primary role is to ensure the security of civilian communities and that soldiers can defend themselves if they are threatened by MILF forces in these areas.

"Should there be any individual or group who disrupts the peace and threatens to harm the Filipino people, the AFP will not hesitate to use force in order to subdue them, restore peace and secure the Filipino people," he said.

Sitting ducks

The AFP will not allow its soldiers to become "sitting ducks" and will take "calibrated actions to defend themselves and the communities," he said.

Yano said the 40 incidents took place from May 1 to June 30. They included eight sabotage operations against the routes and generating facilities of the National Transmission Corporation (Transco).

Yano said there was no danger of the situation degenerating into all-out war similar to the military's Mindanao campaign in 2000 mainly because of the presence of the Joint Coordinating Committee on Cessation of Hostilities (JCCH), composed of government and MILF representatives, as well as in the courts.

"This is the essence of the peace process ... Our commanders are aware of this and although there have been many violations of the ceasefire agreement by the MILF, we have brought these to the attention of the joint ceasefire committee," Yano said.

He said government troops are under orders to "stretch their patience to the limit" to uphold the primacy of the peace process and their responsibility for the safety of non-civilian communities."

He said government forces in Central Mindanao are "capable of performing the three-fold task of countering" 1,750 MILF fighters, which includes carrying out development projects in the Mindanao provinces.

Yano said recent attacks against government troops in Central Mindanao appear to show a "weakness" on the part of the MILF leadership.

The MILF has 6 to 8 thousand but said that the attacks were not sanctioned by the MILF leadership.

The AFP chief said the attacks appear to have been led by MILF rebel division leaders "who in our assessment have grown impatient with the peace process."

"There is some percentage or some factions within the MILF that we can say are recalcitrant elements," he said. — Mike Frialde

Nursing association backs new curriculum

By Kristine L. Alave

THE PHILIPPINE NURSES ASSOCIATION (PNA) yesterday lauded a controversial new order of the Commission on Higher Education that adds more subjects to the four-year nursing course.

In a statement, PNA president Dr. Leah Arceo-Dapena said there is no need for a Senate (SR&R) Memorandum Order No.5 (CMO 5), saying the new subjects would make the country's nursing graduates more competitive.

Issued last May, CMO 5 adds 26 units to the basic 88 nursing curriculum's 165 units. Practicum hours would also increase to 2,700 hours from the current requirement of 2,112 hours.

Members of the Coordinating Council of Private Educational Associations (Cocopea) had questioned the order in court, saying no public hearings on the matter were held.

They warned that the move would increase the cost of a nursing education.

A Pasig Regional Trial Court, however, denied Cocopea's petition for a temporary restraining order (TRO). Government lawyers had argued that "public need outweighs private" and been held.

Dapena reported that some 241 nursing schools have already implemented the new curriculum while 71 more schools have until next year to comply.

She said the strengthened curriculum would give Filipino nurses "leverage" in the international market.

The PNA warned that demand for Filipino nurses in key destinations such as the United States and United Kingdom has been declining in the past two years.

Aside from the additional classes, the order also requires nursing students to undergo an intensive exam even before they graduate.

Dapena added that the extra exam would be "minimal," saying the new classes and exams would eliminate the need for students to enroll in review courses for their licensure exams.

"They will have to take comprehensive appraisals. They can't graduate if they don't pass it. So this means that even before they graduate, there is already an appraisal," Dapena said in an interview.

Under the new curriculum, students will encounter basic nursing subjects in their freshman year, instead of having to wait until their second year.

"They will know in their first year if they want to pursue nursing," she said.

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Week

7-12 JULY 2000

Sa Negosyo, Abot-Kamay Ang Asenso!

dti

Globe

MEGATRADE HALL

Gates foundation donates P23M for 'Frank' victims

By Kristine L. Alave

THE WORLD'S THIRD RICHest man has donated $500,000 for the victims of typhoon "Frank," the United States-based Catholic Relief Services (CRS) said yesterday.

Michael Hozak, CRS country representative, said the funds from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation will be routed through the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines' National Secretariat for Social Action — Justice and Peace. Gates, who retired only a few days ago, used to be No. 1 on the list of wealthiest men of Forbes Magazine.

The foundation, Frank said, responded to the call for donations issued by the CRS, the humanitarian arm of United States Conference of Catholic Bishops long known for its generosity to the Philippines.

"We were about to sign the contract. We expect it in a day or two," Frank said.

The former Microsoft boss and his wife set up the Gates Foundation in 2000 to support health and development programs around the world. Two months ago, Gates stepped down as Microsoft's chief executive officer to devote his time to philanthropy.

Hozak said the funds — equivalent to P23.4 million as of yesterday's exchange rate — would be used to buy emergency assistance packages for families left homeless and displaced by the calamity in the Bicol region and Catanduanes.

The CRS official said they are also working with Filipino-American groups who have expressed their willingness to help the typhoon victims.

Neam official said they have yet to receive the funds and said it would be a big help for their relief efforts.

Bishop Broderick Pabillo, Neam chair, said he was notified of the grant yesterday.

New address for UK Embassy

THE BRITISH EMBASSY IN the Philippines is moving to a new address.

The announcement from the embassy said that it will be closed starting today and will reopen on July 19 in the following address:

120 Upper McKinley Road McKinley Town Centre Fort Bonifacio, Taguig Centre 1634 Metro Manila.

The VFS Visa Application Centre in Intramuros will remain open but will deal with applications solely by appointment which qualify under the fast track criteria which is available through http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk/servlet/front.asp.

The normal expected turnaround time of 48 working hours will not be valid during this time and for the period immediately following. Fast track applicants should expect to be able to collect their passports within 5-7 working days during this period.

The embassy also apologized for any inconvenience the move may cause. Cynthia A. Balana

More subsidies for poor; Palace can't tell how much

By Tonette Orejas,
Inquirer Central Luzon

ANGELES CITY—POOR families can expect more cash subsidies from the government once the Finance department is able to determine the exact amount of the government's windfall earnings from the 12 percent value-added tax on oil, Malacañang said yesterday.

According to deputy presidential spokesperson Lucilo Bayan, President Macapagal-Arroyo is just waiting for word from the Department of Finance on how much more the government could make from the fuel taxes.

"If we know how much the windfall is, then we can allocate. That's the time we can add subsidies," Bayan told reporters on the sidelines of 9th Aringay visit here to inaugurate a medical building dedicated to her late mother, the Dr. Evangelina M. Macapagal Medical Tower of the Angeles University Foundation Medical Center.

The President has released an initial P4 billion from the windfall earnings from fuel taxes to three subsidies in the past, including small electricity consumers, poor students, and pregnant upwomen and drivers.

Palparile said the President was not in favor of proposals to scrap the VAT.

She said the President's position is that VAT affects mostly the middle class and the rich, rather than the poorest section of the population who do not buy many VAT-able commodities.

Customs officials agreed with Malacañang's position to retain the VAT on oil products, saying that removal of the tax would cut revenue collections by 40 percent.

Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales said 40 percent of the bureau's collections come from the VAT on oil which accounts for 70 percent of the country's total imports.

Sen. Edgardo Angara yesterday **slammed** against **suspending** the VAT on oil, saying the government would lose the resources it needs to fund food and energy subsidies.

Alternative energy sources

"Instead of immediately suspending the VAT on oil, the Philippines should seek ways to cushion the country from the impact of the oil price hike by exploring alternative energy sources," he said.

Sen. Mar Roxas, however, said he is for temporarily suspending the VAT on petroleum products, claiming **that VAT collections would still** increase because of the increases in the price of oil.

Roxas said revenue collections were already overflowing because **of the high price of oil and it was** about time that the money is returned to the people.

He urged people in and their House representatives in time for **the opening of Congress on July 24** so they would vote for the suspension of the VAT.

Bayan and other opposition senators accused Finance Secretary Margarita Teves of misleading the public on the effects of suspending the VAT on oil.

"Teves does not know his arithmetic. The loss from an oil VAT suspension is not P75 billion as he claims but is closer to P15 and P20 billion. Companies that use oil as a major input would not be able to deduct their oil VAT payments from their taxes, hence the losses to the government would be much less," he said in a text message.

Militant groups are planning to stage rallies and walkouts today and on July 10 to protest against price hikes.

The League of Filipino Students (LFS), Anakbayan, National Union of Students of the Philippines and College Editors Guild in the Philippines said its members will stage walkouts in various campuses throughout Metro Manila today and on July 10.

Another coalition, the People's Caravan for Truth, Justice and Change, whose members have been making groups of schools and communities in Metro Manila and neighboring provinces, has launched its "Isang Milyong Lagda, Isang Pronoy" (One Million Signatures, One Protest) drive against oil price hikes and the VAT.

With reports from Cynthia D. Balana, Margaret C. Ortiz, GW.C. Cabanatuan Jr. and Jerome Aning

Wife seeks release of RCBC 'fall guy'

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE WIFE OF A FORMER SOLdier accused of taking part in the giddy bank heist that left 18 persons dead in Calbayog, Laguna yesterday appealed to President Macapagal-Arroyo and the Commission on Human Rights for justice, saying her husband was being made a "fall guy" in the case.

Leah Gonzalvo, in a plea sentence to Quezon City, also said her husband, a poor man, was denied his rights to a preliminary investigation and to be appraised of the charges against him.

"We are appealing for justice, through your office, because our rights were violated when the Criminal Capital Region Police Office, headed by Director Ismael Rariza, presented my husband to the media as the prime suspect in the case," she said in a letter to CHR chair Leila de Lima.

"I am calling on the president and the CHR to help my husband because he is just a fall guy in the case," a tearful Gonzalvo said in Filipino.

Police filed robbery with homicide charges against Gonzalvo and 14 others before the Laguna prosecutor's office on May 31 in connection with the May 16 heist at the Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. branch in Calbayan. Eight bank employees and a driver's representative were shot dead before the robbers exited away some P12 million. A ninth employee died two days later in the hospital.

According to the police, her husband, ex-Sgt. Ricardo "Edgar" Gonzalvo had been "positively identified" by a nine-member eyewitness as one of the culprits in the gruesome bank robbery.

His wife, however, said her husband was in their neighborhood at Barangay 71, Southside in Makati City on the day the crime took place.

She has three of our five kids by various illnesses but he never reported to any clinic to save them[," she said. Their third child] died of leukemia in January.

In her letter to the CHR on June 16, Gonzalvo appealed to De Lima to help her husband, detained for more than a month now at the Bureau of Jail Management in Bilibid, Laguna.

When reached by phone yesterday De Lima said she already sent a team of investigators from the main office to look into Gonzalvo's case.

Gonzalvo's lawyer, Jose Mario Jr. said he has already moved to quash the information against Gonzalvo, saying that his arrest was "very irregular."

GMA lawyer leads ERC derby

ENERGY REGULATORY COMmission Chair Rodolfo Albano is poised preparing setting off former hearing over who Malacañang would chose as his replacement.

Both Francis Saguisag and the ERC post has become a vocal position in view of the public debate on surging oil and power prices.

"It's the President's choice," he conceded, but added that he hoped she would appoint a credible and experienced individual to head the regulatory body.

Among the names being floated as possible replacements are deputy chief presidential legal counsel Zenaida Duran, economist counsel and former Secretary Jose Pavalvar Alberto Agra and Lanao del Norte Rep. Abpio Cirilo Bacalling.

Duran, former Pampanga Representative and a close ally of the President, was rumored to be a strong contender.

Asked for confirmation, Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Sergio Apostol said: "She's one of the candidates. She might already have been appointed."

But ERC spokesperson Francis Saguisag Jose said the regulatory agency had yet to receive the appointment papers of Albano's replacement.

ERC commissioner Alejandro Barin has been named officer-in-charge starting tomorrow.

Duran, who hails from Lubao, practiced law mainly in San Fernando, Pampanga, as branch clerk of court in 1983, and research attorney and prosecuting fiscal in 1986.

She started her judicial career in 1992 when she was elevated councilor of Lubao, then congresswoman in 1995.

Abigail L. Ho and Gil Cabacungan Jr.

De la Paz ties to GMA foes led to 'removal'

From page A1

Romulo Neri, chair of the Commission on Higher Education, effective Aug. 1.

As SSS administrator, Neri will also head a new Cabinet cluster, the National Social Welfare program, that Ms Arroyo created Tuesday.

De la Paz refused to—discover, however, on the political aspect of the change in leadership at the SSS, which manages P366 billion worth of assets and contributions from 23 million members.

"You know I will not answer questions like that," she said when pressed further about the reasons for her departure.

Time to leave

The outgoing SSS chief said, however, that she had been at the helm of the pension fund for seven years already and that it was a "good time" for her to leave.

She said there was a "confluence," of the Palace appointments of Neri as her replacement and her need for more time to take care of personal affairs.

"I need to look after my health, too," De la Paz said.

Against Neri appointment

A number of sources set against the appointment of Neri, a reluctant witness in the Senate probe of the National Broadband Network (NBN)–deal, in the SSS, saying that it could further stoke political controversies amid the economic crisis.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said Neri was qualified to serve as chief executive officer of the state-run pension fund.

As part of the SSEC, De la Paz joined calls for President Macapagal-Arroyo to step down during the so-called Hyatt 10 crisis in 2005, in the wake of the "Hello Garci" wiretapping controversy in which the former alleged rigged the 2004 presidential election in her favor. The President has denied the allegation.

Unwise, untimely

In the Senate, Sen. Mar Roxas described Neri's appointment to the SSS as "unwise" and "untimely," especially considering that Neri has "minimal, real-life experience in the marketplace to sit atop the SSS which has nearly 30 million members."

"I would not have made the appointment. These are turbulent times for the country...the stock market is volatile, the peso is losing money, and we are better safe by global uncertainties," he said. This appointment will just drive unneeded political controversy."

Sen. Francis Escudero (Np) said that Neri had already proved that he placed the interest of Ms Arroyo above the interest of the public when he refused to divulge what the President had told him after telling her that he was offered P200 million to favor the overpriced ZTE Corp. contract for the $329-million NBN deal.

The deal, which is being investigated by the Senate, was scrapped until allegations that officials, including the President and her husband, received bribes from the Chinese telecommunications firm. The first tranche have denied the charges.

Off limits

"I am worried that he would take over the private money of private citizens that should be off limits to the political or financial interests of anybody in government. I just hope and pray that he will not spend the SSS' money for political gains," Escudero said.

Sen. Maita Ann Consuelo "Jinggoy" Madrigal was perplexed by the changing of the guard at the SSS. "People who have attended the hearings over their heads should not be appointed in any government position," she said.

Sen. Nikki Lanzo said causing another political appointee to a government head, like Government Service Insurance System chief Winston Garcia, would send an alarming signal of Ms Arroyo's plans on the SSS and GSIS funds, especially with the coming elections.

Ermita said concerns over the management of the pension fund was "definitely on the mind of a fellow like Secretary Neri" who, he said, was told by the President: "Don't put in jeopardy the SSS's interest or its members."

"Everyone knows the—competence as an executive and as an economic czar of Secretary Neri," Ermita said, pointing out that before joining the Cabinet, Neri had served as chief of the Congressional Planning and Budget Office of the House of Representatives and professor at the Asian Institute of Management.

Neri will serve as SSS administrator with Cabinet rank and head the newly launched national social welfare program of government.

Covered by executive privilege

With the SSS being elevated to a Cabinet portfolio, it will be covered by the doctrine of executive privilege, Ermita said.

This means that Neri will continue to be barred from disclosing details discussed during Cabinet meetings or conversations with the President, including his knowledge of the deal with ZTE Corp. While reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Michael Lim Ubac

AN APPEAL TO PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO

We, insurance companies, brokers and agents serving Filipino motorists, are appealing to you, Madam President, on the issue of the Compulsory Third Party Liability (CTPL) insurance.

The Department of Transportation and Communication (DOTC) has issued Order 2007-28 that takes away the CTPL business from private sector and gives it exclusively to the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS).

This takeover is unconstitutional because it creates a monopoly and a restraint of trade. It will take away P2.5 B worth of existing business from the private sector. It is illegal and immoral and we are questioning it in court.

This CTPL insurance provides P100T benefit for death and injuries caused by motor vehicles. We cannot comprehend how GSIS can adequately serve the 5.5 million motorists on top of its responsibility as exclusive government insurer and replace an entire private industry - 90 companies and 60,000 agents nationwide.

If the government monopolizes this CTPL business, these will happen:

1. The jobs of more than 60,000 insurance agents will instantly vanish; their families and employees will lose their livelihood.

2. Dozens of insurance companies will go out of business and thousands of employees will lose their jobs.

3. The country's 5.5 million motorists will no longer have a choice of insurance companies to serve them. Without competition service will inevitably deteriorate.

4. Motorists cannot complain to the Insurance Commission since it has no jurisdiction over the GSIS.

5. Complaints will only flood the GSIS for not being able to serve its newfound 5.5 million CTPL customers and it will strain its ability to serve its existing members - all government employees and pensioners.

The negative effects of the DOTC order are simply too much to merit whatever benefits the order's proponents say it stands to bring. It will take away rather than create jobs for the people.

Please, Madam President, junk the DOTC Order 2007-28 and allow us to continue in improving our business. We have recently automated the CTPL Interim System.

We trust completely in your wisdom and we know you will not let us down.

Yours in the service of the Filipino people,

Philippine Insurers and Reinsurers Association (PIRA)
Organization of Insurance Companies of the Philippines (OICP)
Association of Insurance Brokers of the Philippines (AIBP)
Society of Independent Insurance Intermediaries (Society of Triple I)
Society of Underwriters (SOUND)
Bukluran ng mga Manggagawa sa Industriya ng Seguro (BMIS)
Alliance of Non Life Insurance Workers of the Philippines (ANLIWP)
Movement for the Upliftment of Non Life Insurance (MUNLI)
Philippine Insurers Club (PIC)

With support from:

Universal Insurance Transport Accident Agency Solutions (UNITRANS)
Personal Accident Insurance Alliance (PAA)
Automobile Association Philippines (AAP), the National Auto Club

'Over the P26M ...

From page A1

succession, including Madrigal.

Nil other proportion of the decedent was included in the will and Chavez's share value is over and above the amount P26,134,137.23 shall be covered by the rules on legal succession," Pimentel said in a five-page order dated July 2.

But in the same order, Pimentel also ruled that the "executor of Collantes' will... Bienvenido Dizon Jr. and Bank of the Philippine Islands president Aurelio Montinola III, to begin the process of administering the assets covered by the will.

"Since the estate has now acknowledged heir only my rights as a legal heir but also those of my other relatives, I intend to continue that fight for the benefit of those whom my Tito Chinoy... loved...such as her foundation," Madrigal said in a press conference at the Senate.

She promised to visit, over whatever she would inherit from her aunt's wealth in the Consuelo Madrigal Foundation, and added:

"I think the foundation should get between 25 percent and 30 percent of what my aunt left behind. All of us are already wealthy, we don't need the money more."

Distributing inheritance

Madrigal had earlier sought to invalidate the will and opposed moves to put it into effect, claiming it might have been forged.

Pimentel, however, said he was convinced not to rule on the senator's motions because these sought to nullify a decision that was already final.

But he said Madrigal was not "precluded from filing the appropriate case for annulment of judgment."

Pimentel effectively authorized Dizon and Montinola to begin distributing the inheritance, with the stipulation that the authority "shall cover only those expressly stated in the will of the decedent and to the extent of P26,134,137.23."

Collantes' last will and testament instructed the assets worth only that amount, which is believed to be a mere fraction of what she had left.

In an earlier interview, Madrigal said her aunt's estate was bigger than the swapped $329-million Broadband Network deal with China's ZTE Corp. "You'll be shocked," she had said.

Children

The childless Collantes died in her residence in Forbes Park, Makati, on March 24 and left her estate to her relatives, former Foreign Affairs Secretary Gonzalo Moncada, the wife of will executor Montinola.

With Pimentel's order, Makati girl's lawyer, Ernesto Francisco Jr., said the winner had won a "partial but substantial victory" because the sum was legally entitled to a portion of the inheritance that was not specified in the will.

Citing provisions of the Civil Code, Francisco said 50 percent of the inheritance was reserved by the law for Collantes' children and the other half, to Collantes' brothers and sisters, and, by representation, her nieces and nephews.

Francisco refused to provide an estimate of Collantes' estate, saying only that the amount not covered by the will was much larger than P26-million.

He said the larger, more important task at hand was to count the identification and presentation to the court of Collantes' assets not covered by the will.

These would include, he said, bank deposits and trust accounts in the Philippines and abroad, as well as real and personal properties.

Standing by position

Asked to comment, lawyer Alberto Lerma, who speaks for Montinola, said they were standing by their position that the will was valid and binding.

Lerma said the court order "did not impugn the will," and in fact upheld it and authorized her client to begin its implementation.

She said her clients were not yet prepared to comment on Pimentel's order regarding the assets not identified in the will.

Francisco, on the other hand, said Madrigal would no longer appeal the ruling although she would "in principle" continue to question the validity of the will itself.

"However, we will file a separate action to annul the probate, it's only to prove that the will is not the true and valid will of the deceased," Francisco said.

Madrigal had earlier said the will dated March 22, 2006, might have been falsified because it bore a different signature from other legal documents Collantes had signed.

The senator had said the will made her aunt look like a "bad woman" for not fulfilling a promise to leave part of her estate to the charitable foundation named after her.

'Backfired' strategy

Madrigal yesterday said the purported strategy of her sister and other relatives to undervalue Collantes' assets had "backfired."

Collantes' assets had "backfired." At least 15 of [Collantes'] surviving heirs and the foundation to share in her wealth," instead of only three dividing it up.

Surprise, 3 oil firms roll back gas price by ₱1/liter

By Abigail L. Ho

WHILE THE RISE IN WORLD OIL PRICES shows no sign of letting up, motorists can heave a sigh of relief as oil firms Pilipinas Shell, Petron and Flying V decided to reduce the prices of their gasoline products by ₱1 a liter.

The rollback took effect at 12:01 a.m. today.

Ramon Villavicencio, Flying V chair and chief executive, said the oil firm had a "considerable" enough margin from gasoline, enabling it to pass on some relief to motorists using gasoline-fed vehicles.

The same could not be said for diesel, however, as the company still has around 96 a liter worth of undercollection to recoup, Villavicencio said.

"I think it will be better to recover (those under-recoveries) in one blow, because then we can focus our attention on gasoline and provide some relief for those using that fuel," he said.

If the diesel under-recoveries of P6 a liter could be recouped at one time via a corresponding P6 a liter increase at the pump, then motorists would expect no more diesel price hikes for the rest of July, Villavicencio said.

Depends on int'l prices

"But I hope international prices don't go up too much in the coming weeks. If that happens, we have no way of ensuring that pump prices won't go up in August," he said.

Since the start of the year, gasoline, diesel and kerosene prices had risen 18 times for a total of ₱9.8 a liter for gasoline and ₱19.50 a liter for diesel and kerosene.

Prices of premium unleaded gasoline are now between ₱50.75 and ₱63.98 a liter; diesel between ₱51 and ₱54.85, and kerosene between ₱57.18 and ₱60.30 a liter, inclusive of the 12-percent value-added tax. The gasoline prices already include the ₱1-a-liter reduction.

Data from the Department of Energy showed that the regional benchmark Dubai crude surged to a July average of $128.48 a barrel from $127.82 a barrel last month.

The price of unleaded gasoline based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products jumped to an average of $143.88 a barrel in the July 1-9 period from $140.33 a barrel in June.

MOPS-based diesel skyrocketed to an average of $178.39 a barrel in the first nine days of the month from the June average of $169.36 a barrel.

Higher fares demanded

From page A1

even if it means a staggering adjustment of ₱6 to ₱10 a liter. The Consumer Price Watch estimates that oil firms have yet to recoup losses of ₱16 a liter from diesel, the fuel used by public utility vehicles.

"It is clear that the present fare hike will not be enough," Sen Manny said.

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) announced on Tuesday that jeepneys may charge a minimum fare of ₱9.50, up ₱0 centavos, and an added load 25 centavos, or from ₱1.25 to ₱1.50, for each succeeding kilometer starting tomorrow. But the jeepney drivers need to post the fare matrix on the vehicles.

Metro Manila buses may charge an additional ₱1, or from ₱9 to ₱10, for the first five kilometers, with an additional 20 centavos for every succeeding kilometer (₱1.75 to ₱1.95). Air-conditioned buses may charge ₱12 from ₱11.50 plus ₱2.05 per succeeding kilometer from ₱1.75.

Taxis may also start collecting an "add-on" rate of ₱10 on top of the metro charge instead of increasing the flag-down rate.

Second hike in 2 months

The increases were the second in less than two months.

On May 21, the minimum fare for jeepneys was raised by 50 centavos to ₱7.50, for ordinary buses in Metro Manila by ₱1 to ₱9 and for air-conditioned buses by ₱1.50 to ₱11.50.

For provincial routes, ordinary buses were allowed an increase in the minimum fare by 10 centavos per kilometer, while air-conditioned buses were allowed to charge 25 centavos more per kilometer.

But Mitos said the next minimum fare increase of ₱1 for jeepneys since May 21 would not even result in an additional income of ₱200 a day for drivers and operators. In contrast, he said, the 10 times that diesel price went up since January (up by 92 percent) had cost drivers ₱500 a day.

If the price of diesel increased by ₱10 a liter this weekend, it would result in an additional loss of ₱800 for drivers, according to the Piston spokesperson. Sen Mitos said a driver would suffer "a deficit of ₱870, which will be going to the oil companies."

Transport needs gov't help

Santos earlier explained that the transport sector wanted to maintain its fares so as not to drive passengers away. But to do this, the sector would need help from the government.

He said the government may help by relaxing on its promised fuel subsidies, access to safer and cheaper alternative fuels, and curbs on extortion and unlicensed public utility vehicles.

"We see no end to fuel price increases so far. We are running out of options for coping," Santos said.

Low-income taking from low-income

Some commuters, like Grace Ramos, said they were resigned to the idea that transport fares would go up again as a result of continuing fuel price increases.

Others, like Jaun Ecubin, an employee who commutes from Tayug Road, to Ortiga in Mandaluyong City every day, expressed frustration that measures to help wage earners cope with the situation were not being implemented.

"A higher fare is OK if there's a substantial wage increase," Ecubin said.

She said high-income earners were not taking public transport unlike the minimum-wage earners. "So low-income drivers are taking their extra income from other low-income earners. And why is the value-added tax on all the transport items?" she said.

Sen Mitos said the passengers' capacity to pay higher fares was also a serious concern for drivers, which was why his group was supporting labor groups' call for an across-the-board wage hike of ₱125 per day nationwide.

"It is important for government to help workers improve their income so that they can cope with higher prices of goods and services. We are supporting this especially because minimum wage earners comprise the majority of our passengers," he said.

VAT on oil

Besides backing a wage increase, Piston is continuing its campaign to get the VAT on and the Oil Deregulation Law scrapped.

Sen Mitos said these steps could result in a rollback of ₱6.50 a liter for diesel, ₱7.35 for gasoline and ₱90 per 11-kg tank of LPG. The reduction, he said, would help the transport sector cope with ongoing costs without the need for a fare hike.

Mobile court resolves 20 …

From page A1

The men hated Zeta Cruz, wearing the cursed yellow T-shirt of a detainee, got their murder of witchcraft later from Peter and Lim, who told Ilyn that he should shape up from now on and he would get all the help that he needed if he decided to put his life in order.

He told during the daylong hearings conducted by Ilyn and three other judges on the bus, 20 cases were resolved and the inmates got either temporary or permanent freedom from various crimes, mainly against property, for which they had been charged.

87-year-old inmate

One of the inmates who queued outside the bus was 87-year-old Juanita Sedeñas, whose case for alleged drug pushing had been pending for the last six years. "Even if I didn't do it, I will admit that I did it just to get this case over with," she said.

The justice-on-wheels program, pioneered after a similar project successfully implemented in Sorsogon to decongest prisons there, was launched in the Philippine first years ago with funding from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

Four buses that had been converted into courtrooms were acquired in 2004. Three buses have been deployed in the provinces in an attempt to bring justice in many of the accused languishing in remote jails. While the remaining inmates in metro populations in Metro Manila, Pasay decided to field one in the metropolis.

The Manila City Jail is one of the most crowded in the capital.

WHEELS OF JUSTICE TAKE THE HIGH ROAD Court hearings on Wednesday led to the release of at least three inmates from the Manila City Jail. Hearings are held on site, this one in front of the Fabella Hospital in Sta. Cruz, Manila. EDD ANGELES

It was built to house only 1,800 inmates but is now crammed with more than 3,000.

Likely surge in crimes

Perez told reporters that he was worried that with the current economic crunch, there could be a surge in crimes.

"It's only natural. If there are hard, crimes against property rise. That's a big problem, the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government, and the local government units, have to work together," he said.

"The poor who are accused of illegal acts need access to justice because if you are already hungry and are oppressed by the justice system, that is a dangerous thing for a country," Perez told reporters.

"If a person is hungry and suffers injustice, he will be thinking bad things," he said.

Socialize justice

Perez said he had ordered an inventory of pending cases and hoped other local government units would cooperate with the Supreme Court in the same way that Lim had.

He also said that the high court was thinking of how the additional funds would be used to bring down the cost of justice.

The proposal of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines to remove the filing fees for elected cases, and only charge filing fees for civil cases, is being studied, he said.

"We will consider that because where you talk of criminal cases, liberty is the issue. That is why we not look into the capability if they have the money to pay those fees. Liberty is beyond cost. We will think of how to socialize the cost of justice," he said. With Jhoe Pictoria, Inquirer Research

New crop of officers …

From page A1

interests in the province, but he declined to elaborate what he means to local journalists.

"You know about it," was his answer to our queries.

The Central Command chief, however, belied claims of human rights groups that Palparan had created the support of Malacañang and the AFP leadership.

Ermita went to this town, the base of the Army's 62nd Infantry Battalion under the command of Lt. Col. Jonathan Potot, to assess the counter-insurgency campaign in Eastern Samar.

Palparan served as the top Army officer in Eastern Visayas for eight months in 2003 and vowed to end the region's insurgency problem.

According to the human rights group Karapatan-Southern Tagalog Region, 26 extrajudicial killings and 712 human rights abuses were committed during his stint. Negrenia, however, denied any involvement in the alleged abuses.

Palparan assumed command of the Army's 7th Infantry Division based in Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija on Sept. 1, 2005. His first stint in Central Luzon was in 1991 when he was executive officer of the 24th IB based in Pampanga.

New generation of officers

According to Ermita, there is now a "new and young generation" of AFP officers headed by Gen. Alexander Yano, who do not condone any human rights abuses.

"We have realized that we cannot win the battle in our through an armed struggle but winning the hearts and minds of people. The (military) operations that we have conducted were one of the reasons why up to now, the insurgency problem still persists in the country," Ermita said.

He urged the military to closely cooperate with other sectors in scoring like local government units, Church leaders, journalists and the villagers in their battles against the CPP rebels.

"We have to work especially with the Church. When a priest says that you are right, though you look like Fernando Poe Jr., people will believe him," Ermita said.

'Benevolent Torturer' tag

As early as 1981, Palparan earned the tag "Benevolent Torturer" for refusing accounts after interrogation and torture.

In an approach never done by commanders before him, Palparan expanded the disarray of war by deploying special operations teams (SOTs) of about 200 troops and CHAs where suspected CPP front organizations flourished. The military called them white armies.

The human rights group Karapatan said at least 71 summary executions, five disappearances, 14 threatened killings and 46 disappearances occurred in all of Central Luzon's seven provinces from February 2001 to August 2006 during Palparan's 11-month stint. With a report from Nestle Ovalles, Inquirer Central Luzon

Ringing phone, weeping maid, a friend in deed

From page A1

gent, streamlining cooperation with the dreaded Immigration and Citizenship Enforcement Agency (ICE), which is part of Homeland Security and handles labor and sex trafficking cases.

ICE declares human trafficking as "the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery."

For months, snippets of a tale had reached among Filipino domestic workers in New York about a woman who had fled her employers, the family of a top-ranking Philippine diplomat.

Only after Baoanan's comrades were sheltered in the Interfaith Center of Manhattan did all the snippets finally together to form a story.

Unprepossessing

As it turned out, I had met Baoanan several times in gatherings overseen by domestic workers. She was quite unprepossessing—blunt, but decent. Back in stark contrast, glamorous top and pants, slippers on her feet.

She's a few inches over five feet, waist and hips spreading in incipient middle age, hair in layered shuffle cut.

The police pic I recall now, sent to her every sentence, the third person hazy (they) replacing the familiar (we/you).

She was, in other words, quite typical and could be lost in plain sight among the 500 members of the Damayan Migrants Association, which she oversees by way of Filipino domestic workers in New York.

It was difficult to reconcile her personality with the sudden terrified to her by her detractors.

But first, a caveat/note in her complaint, Baoanan told the court only $11.80 an hour was what the Baja household from August 2003 to April 2007. (For comparison sessions (see $130), but no closer reading it turned out to be the same amount.) And she worked 15 hour seven day for these months plus, several days to 24 hours for the Baja children.

Ambassador Baja, who headed the Philippine Mission to the United Nations from 2003 to 2007, and his wife Norma have denied this in Manila.

Apart from the couple, the other defendants are their daughter Elizabeth Baja Fernando and the Baja-owned Lahaire International Travel Inc.

Blood sugar

This was how soluble sources told Baoanan's story:

Baoanan was the only domestic worker in the Baja/Ayers three residence at 10 Sutton (left). Never during those months.

She didn't get to eat each day at dinner with checking Norma Baja's blood sugar. It was an unusual task for a house help, but Baoanan was trained to a nurse.

Then she made breakfast for the three adults and one child (Fernando) in the household—a different breakfast for each. That done, it was on to straightening out bedrooms, cleaning the public rooms, doing the laundry, and more cooking.

On weekends, the one-in-line came home from work outside the city, bringing his laundry.

Of the two other Filipino women said to have worked at the Baja residence, only one was trained in the complaint—a Bernadette Tongson, who has yet to be found.

A person of the same name reportedly signed a petition on the Cam Ranh-bridge Garcia, a domestic worker said to have killed herself in New York last year.

According to those who knew her, Baoanan is from the province of Cavite.

Lahaire

In 1997, she set up a store, that she had to close when the economy got really bad. That was when she decided to find employment overseas.

Jeanita "Baby" Magbitang, identified in court documents as a recruiter, had been a customer at Baoanan's store. Magbitang allegedly took her to Lahaire International Travel in Lahaire International Travel in Manila, where she met Ben Baja and Gina Nicolas Baja.

Baoanan reportedly mortgaged her house to pay the P250,000 for the package deal that included compensation to the United States, visa, work authorization and help to finding work in a nurse.

Norma Baja took Baoanan and another Filipina called Dorie to the Department of Foreign Affairs to apply for diplomatic passports, according to Baoanan's complaint.

Lahaire staff members then accompanied them to the US Embassy to obtain their visas. But for some reason, Dorie dropped out and Baoanan flew to the United States as the Baja' sole "domestic employee."

From the airport, Baoanan was taken directly to the Bat 66th consular residence. She said she had to surrender her "real" passport to Norma Baja.

Lahaire was established in 1981 and had purportedly held "a variety" on government travel dishes after parties, Baja said.

She said she and her daughter, and even the caterers hired for the parties, had helped in the cleaning up.

"I also washed my own clothes, especially if they're delicate ones," she said.

Baja denied that Baoanan was made to eat leftovers, saying they had more than enough food in the house.

She said she had given Baoanan used winter clothes, and had bought her a pair of winter rubber shoes, except that the latter said she was used to wearing sandals (not those).

Baja said that contrary to her duties, Baoanan could leave the consular residence: "She would go to Central Park."

And it was not true that her grandson, who was four or five years old at that time, would hurt Baoanan, Baja said.

"He's a fine boy," she said, adding that they were all home that Baoanan had to drag her grandson into the case against them.

Bajas deny shabby treatment of Baoanan: We're not shameless

By Christine O. Avendaño

NORMA BAJA DENIED THAT she and her family had shabbily treated Marichu Baoanan who, she said, worked for them only from Jan. 18 to March 2, 2007, or less than two months.

"Hindi naman kami malupit[sic] [We're not dumehon]," she said yesterday on the phone.

Baja said it was not true that she had confiscated Baoanan's passport, adding that she later had the passport when she left the household.

She said it was also not true that Baoanan had been made to hand-wash her and her daughter's sequined clothes, and that vanting on the panties that her husband, Ambassador Lauro Baja Jr., found on part of his job as head of the Philippine Mission to New York, had kept Baoanan up until the wee hours of the morning.

Bajas helped in housework

Her family did their share of the housework, like washing

She said she and her daughter, and even the caterers hired for the parties, had helped in the cleaning up.

"I also washed my own clothes, especially if they're delicate ones," she said.

Baja denied that Baoanan was made to eat leftovers, saying they had more than enough food in the house.

She said she had given Baoanan used winter clothes, and had bought her a pair of winter rubber shoes, except that the latter said she was used to wearing sandals (not those).

Baja said that contrary to her duties, Baoanan could leave the consular residence: "She would go to Central Park."

And it was not true that her grandson, who was four or five years old at that time, would hurt Baoanan, Baja said.

"He's a fine boy," she said, adding that they were all home that Baoanan had to drag her grandson into the case against them.

Electronic code

The four-bitch residence has electronic security. One using leave the building by entering requires knowing the key code. Norma Baja reportedly made sure that Baoanan never got the code, shielding the keypad with her body whenever they returned from grocery shopping.

And Baoanan in her summer clothes and slip-ons stood out, said an informant.

New York averaged 37.29 degrees Celsius last winter—mild but still cold for New Yorkers, and brutal for those used to tropical heat. A pair of shoes would have made a lot of difference.

As would sentinel napkins, which, I was told, had to be bought and brought to Baoanan by the minister's chauffeurs.

Phone call

Back in the Philippines, with their main breadwinner gone, Baoanan's family had to sell the household appliances for food. Time to go was the TV set.

Baoanan was reportedly in command the thought of killing herself. She was in this near-howling point when she picked up a ringing phone. (She had been told, allegedly by Norma Baja, never to answer the phone.)

The caller was a friend of the Bajas, who was shocked by the profound weeping at the other end of the line. The friend promised to help, and arranged a signal by which Baoanan would know it was safe to answer the phone.

The this friend was wealthy may have inspired the speculation that Baoanan had left the Bajas for a better paying job.

It took a while to arrange a face-to-face meeting. Before that, I would went to Damayan, a nonprofit member-ship institution focusing on helping Filipino domestic workers learn and assert their rights.

The meeting, according to my informant, was at a park on 59th Avenue (likely the Grand Central Park, which is parallel to the street). There, Baoanan was informed of her rights and her options.

She decided to flee. But first, she went back to retrieve her papers and the remaining $60 of her $130 pay.

Legal help

Finding legal help in New York is not difficult; finding the social space where one can host it.

An organization of domestic workers like Damayan can provide the haven: In the former, there is the Asian Women Shelter (before and Edmondson Road (AWARE), as well as the last Area of Downtown Flushing.

The two had earlier collaborated on a case involving two Filipino women who sued their bosses, New Jersey employers for six years of unpaid overtime wages and violation pay.

Tinsman Sanders has assisted 500 lawyers in its firm. AWARE has nine staff attorneys.

Ivy D. Kastiyopas, who was involved in the Bergen County case, works with AWARE's Asian Trafficking Initiative. She is half-Filipina, half-Irish.

On the Baoanan case, Kastiyopas' comment was wry: "It is disappointing and sad when cases like this happen so anyone, of whatever nationality, race or ethnicity. But it is worse and sadder still when the people involved in the same nationality, race and culture as the survivor."

Editor's Note: Nicole Ma Rosa is a Filipino writer living in New York.

Joe de V vows to tell all on ZTE deal, but not now

By Norman Bordadora

PHILIPPINE HELICOPTER: ...yesterday said he would tell everything he knows about the allegedly irregular NBN-ZTE deal and other cases of corruption in the Arroyo administration when he appears before the Senate blue ribbon committee and other public forums in the last week of August.

De Venecia, who claims he was ousted as House Speaker because he sets and surrender had linked the President's husband to the botched NBN-ZTE deal, said he needs to undergo another medical checkup in mid-July to ensure that he is fit for a "long drawn-out battle."

"I still need to get another checkup 10 days after the first one. If the check-up is in the middle of August, then I may be ready by the last week of August," he said.

"I would need an invitation from the Senate for me to testify. How can I go there without an invitation?" De Venecia said.

Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano, the blue ribbon committee chair, said De Venecia only has to tell the committee when he intends to testify and his appearance as a resource person would be scheduled.

MeCD
Kementerian Pembangunan Usahawan dan Koperasi
officially endorsed by MATRADE
PNS
www.pns.com.my
BFA

DOJ will not allow Sulpicio to abandon ship to ir

From page A1

the liability of Sulpicio Lines for acts or omissions harmful to the environment."

"We don't want a ghost ship there," said Senior Deputy Minority Leader Rolin Ocnita, who raised this possibility in the absence of any categorical statement on who would shoulder the cost of refloating the 23,800-ton ferry that is lying upside down off Sibuyan Island.

"Can you imagine what would happen to the economy of the place if the ship was left there?" Ocnita asked.

"There should be a clear statement from the company that it would meet all obligations to the incident, including the cost of refloating the vessel," he told the hearing.

Golez said the Princess of the Stars would cost up an "abandoned bulk for years" if refloating was paid for by the government as left to its insurance company.

He said it would take time before the government could identify funding for such a huge expense.

In the case of the vessel's insurance company, he said it would naturally weigh the cost of refloating the ship against the actual benefits of the materials that would be recovered from the wreckage.

Golez said the underwriter might eventually decide that it would be more "commercially beneficial" to leave the vessel untouched.

"There should be a clear statement from Sulpicio that it would meet all obligations, not just offer words of comfort," Golez said.

Edgar Do, Sulpicio Lines vice president, told during Monday's congressional hearing that the vessel itself was insured for P320-million.

Sulpicio Lines lawyer Victoria Lim-Mendoza had said that by declaring an abandonment under the terms of its hull and machinery insurance, the company was declaring the ship a total loss and transferring its rights and claims of ownership to the insurer.

The ferry sank while en route to Manila to Cebu on June 21 during typhoon with many passengers and crew aboard, most whom survived. Some 209 bodies were recovered but the others unaccounted for, including 16 believed trapped inside the ship.

Golez said he would try to get Lines' commitment that it will take care of the expenses when the second inquiry into the maritime disaster resumed on July 17.

Liable for negligence

Gonzalez said in a statement he would see to it that Sulpicio would live up to its "responsibilities and accountabilities" in the law.

"The law makes the shipowner liable for injury to or death of the passengers arising from its negligence or the owner and the captain enjoys certain

G-8 summit not as green as can be

From page A1

ove the water-saving toilets, complete with seat-warmer and built-in bidet.

Japan has pledged an eco-friendly summit in the resort's verdant hills of Hokkaido island, where leaders from major industrialized powers are setting goals on climate change and other issues. Organizers stocked hotel on the details, even using a stock of trees as a natural air conditioner for the media pavilion.

But despite all the green gadgets, there were goofs, according to environmental activists.

The summit site and the media center are about 25 kilometers away from each other, which made for unnecessary road travel, although some of the shuttle used were fuel cell buses and other green vehicles.

Not normal reality

At the media center, photocopied handouts were ubiquitous, and food came in plastic containers.

Daniel Shirley, political advisor to Greenpeace International, pointed out a tray of watermelon, each slice also encased in its own plastic snap-shut case.

"I think (the summit) is a typical example of how environmental protection is still seen as something that you actively do," Shirley said.

"You create a nice pavilion that is energy efficient. You showcase a car that's better than other cars. But it's not your normal reality. It's not in your normal reality mode to, just go back to the bad old ways."

The summit could be worth all its carbon dioxide emissions if the G-8 governments – the United States, Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Russia, Japan and Canada – make real progress, Meeker said.

"But these meetings here are just opening curtain, both in terms of travelling here and in terms of the decisions the leaders take," he said.

Pledge insufficient

Leading industrialized nations on Tuesday endorsed halving world emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050, stopping short of easier near targets.

But environmental groups dismissed the new G-8 pledge insu

Environmentalists say Japan, United States and Canada have thwarted previous efforts to make a real commitment to fighting climate change by 20

Greenhouse gas emissions, g oil mostly from burning fossil fu electricity generation and tran thou... are blamed for global w and are predicted to cause ev and homelessness disasters unchecked.

Summit host Japan is off to meet its targets under the 1997 Protocol in part because it is be more reliant on coal than expec cording to environmentalists.

Must eco-friendly face

On top of that, the country is ranked "on global warming because fighting between environment m officials, said Akiko Meyer, a change expert with the Union o owned federation.

Nonetheless, Japan put on it

Oh my gas!
'Wag kang magulat, tumaas man ang gas, fares namin bumaba pa rin!
(fare + fuel and insurance surcharges + aviation security fee + 12% VAT).
Sale Period: July 10 to 15, 2008 • Travel Period: July 22 to October 15, 2008 • Promo is non-refundable
ALL-IN DOMESTIC SEAT SALE

Manila to Laoag, Legaspi, Naga, San Jose or Tuguegarao Cebu to Bacolod, Butuan, Cagayan de Oro or Iloilo	P699 ALL-IN
Manila to Bacolod, Boracay (Caticlan), Cebu, Dumaguete, Iloilo, Kalibo, Puerto Princesa, Roxas, Tacloban or Tagbilaran Cebu to Boracay (Caticlan), Clark, Davao, Puerto Princesa or Zamboanga Davao to Iloilo or Zamboanga	P999 ALL-IN
Manila to Butuan, Cagayan de Oro, Cotabato, Davao, Dipolog, General Santos or Zamboanga	P1,499 ALL-IN

Plus affordable ALL-IN package tours from Manila with round trip airfare & all-in hotel accommodations to enjoy!

Laoag P4,618	Cebu P5,324	Boracay (Caticlan) P5,638
Davao P5,658	Cagayan de Oro P7,534	Tagbilaran P10,508

Call (02) 70-20-888 or visit the travel agent nearest you.
NO FINE PRINT HERE!
CEBU PACIFIC AIR.COM

nsurer

this is a responsibility that Sulpicio Lines cannot conveniently avoid by mere abandonment of the vessel," the justice secretary said.

"As such, Sulpicio Lines has no right to abandon the vessel to the insurer and so limit its liability for the detrimental effects on the environment resulting from the sinking of the vessel," he said.

"Sulpicio Lines cannot simply pass on the responsibility of cleaning up the ecological damage to the insurer or the government," he said.

Gov't not liable

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said Sulpicio Lines—not the government—should shoulder the refloating expenses.

"I don't see how government should be made liable for something that is a mistake from the very beginning of the project," Ermita said. "I don't see how it could escape culpability for the accident."

Also yesterday, Judge Antonio Eugenio of the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 24 announced following a hearing that he would issue a ruling on a petition by Sulpicio Lines to stop the Board of Marine Inquiry (BMI) from investigating the disaster.

Sulpicio Lines said the BMI members had prejudged the case and that the board had no jurisdiction over the case.

Protest to press ship removal

In San Fernando, Siargao, fishermen yesterday were organizing a protest on Thursday to press for Sulpicio's immediate removal of the vessel. PNA reports from Christine O. Avendaño, Tina G. Santos and Nina Catherine Gallejo, Inquirer Southern Luzon

eco-friendly face at the summit.

The media center was built of 95 percent reused or recycled materials. It used a grass roof, snow-as-air conditioning, photovoltaic panels and natural lighting to reduce operating energy by 40 percent, said Kimiko Mori, who planned the center's environmental elements.

Outside, Japanese car companies took reporters out for quick spins in the latest cars—like Mazda's RX-8 Hydrogen SE, which can also run on gasoline if hydrogen is not available. Nearby, guests were invited to remove their shoes, Japanese-style, to take a test of a "zero-emission" house.

In the media center's restrooms, signs in the stalls informed guests that the toilets, specially conceived for the summit, could save around 31 percent of water used by conventional models.

But the signs made no mention of how much energy was needed for the toilets' heated bum jets—including hearing for the seat, a gentle deodorizer, a bidet and a final flushing accord to drown out unseemly noises. AP

As prices go up, Cebu Pacific fares go down!

INTERNATIONAL SEAT SALE

Manila to Kuala Lumpur or Kota Kinabalu ₱388

Manila to other INTERNATIONAL DESTINATIONS ₱888

Sale Period: July 10 to 15, 2008 • Travel Period: July 22 to October 15, 2008 • Promo is non-refundable

Plus affordable package tours from Manila with round trip airfare & 3D/2N hotel accommodations to enjoy!

Bangkok ₱3,975	Kaohsiung ₱4,794	Singapore ₱6,796
Kuala Lumpur ₱7,010	Hong Kong ₱8,102	Macau ₱9,752

International fares and packages are exclusive of applicable fees, taxes and surcharges.

CEBU PACIFIC AIR.COM

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
THURSDAY, JULY 10, 2008
INQUIRER
OPINION

Tempting, but ...

EDITORIAL

THE BISHOPS HAVE ADDED THEIR BASSO *profundo* to the growing chorus calling for a review of the Expanded Value Added Tax on fuel. "Out of sympathy for [the poor], there must be a review of all tax laws related to prices of goods, like gasoline," Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, said on Monday, a day after their semi-annual meeting. In effect, the bishops are calling for both the removal of the EVAT, which adds to the price of oil products, and oil deregulation, which allows oil companies to change what they determine to be market prices.

Msgr. Pedro Quitorio, CBCP spokesperson, told reporters it was the first time the bishops went on record against oil deregulation. As for the CBCP's thinking on the EVAT, Bishop Broderick Pabillo summed up the main arguments against it with precision: "Maybe VAT could be reviewed because every increase in price means a bigger tax. In a way the rise in the prices of commodities is an advantage to the government—it gets a lot of revenues. We should try to see if it seriously helps the people."

The immediate removal of the EVAT on oil appears like an alluring temptation. The arithmetic behind it is easy to follow, and easy to sell. At a close of $140 oil, should the government continue to levy a taller tax that it computed based on a price of $100 per barrel of oil?

Sen. Mar Roxas, once a trade secretary in both the Joseph Estrada and Gloria Arroyo Cabinets, has done more than most in pushing for the removal of the EVAT. His main argument relies on the same arithmetic. Speaking yesterday in a mix of Filipino and English, he said: "The price has gone up more than four times. Now government collects P16.80 per barrel [versus the original $3.68]. This was not in the plan, this was not in the forecast or calculations of the government. Government collections are overflowing. That's why I say it's time to return the people's money."

We share the bishops' concern for the poor, and Roxas' dedication to the people's welfare, but we counsel patience. The review of the EVAT must be an honest-to-goodness review, not a synonym or a euphemism for removal.

We agree with the basic idea that removing the EVAT on oil would reduce the prices of oil products. We think, however, that the main beneficiary would not be the poor, but the middle class. That would be no mean thing; after all, the bulk of newspaper readers are from the middle class. But the unintended consequence of removal would be cutting off funding for direct assistance to the ranks.

Sen. Edgardo Angara, a former agriculture and executive secretary, makes a credible argument against the removal of EVAT. "If you remove the EVAT on oil, government will lose its lifeline for subsidies on rice and electricity. Government is faced with a difficult choice. Hence it should seriously study the effects of repealing the EVAT on oil," he said.

In other words, if we give in to the populist temptation we may end up hurting the poor, the very people to whose cause the EVAT removal is being made. Is that in fact what we want to happen? Given worsening economic conditions worldwide, it is here that the government safeguard in sources of revenue; it will need every resource it can get to start the social safety nets the poor will need, and to hold them steady.

The government stands to earn many billions more in EVAT collections this year. Last month, the Department of Finance estimated that additional collections in 2008 could reach P18.6 billion, because of galloping oil prices. There are many citizens who will regard this windfall as nothing less than sinful, at worst, as wrong in itself. Perhaps, if it were another administration, the public would not mind so much. But the scandal-wracked Arroyo administration's crisis of legitimacy has robbed it of the credibility it needs, the credibility required to make sense of Angara's arguments.

Still in a time of increasing economic uncertainty, the last law we want to run afoul of is the unforgiving one of unintended consequences.

Publisher **Isaac Belmonte**
Editor in Chief **Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc**
Managing Editor **Joe Ma. D. Mahiri**
Associate Editor **Melanio S. Silvino**
Associate Editor for Radio-Digital **Ramon R. Carandang**
Opinion Editor **Lynn V. Bayle**
News Editor **Arman T. Camus Jr.** • Deputy Night Chief Specialists **Hazel Pulido**
Chief, News Day Desk **Ruben D. Almendras**
Business Manager **Francisco R. Bautista Jr.**
Senior Desk Editor **Jose B. Lacsamana Jr.**
Editor in Consultant **Amando Doronila**
Chief Photographer **Rene H. Sahagun**
Art & Design Director **Lyndi A. Villaluz**
Board Chairman **Hermon. Perez**
President **Alejandro Prieto-Jamir**
Senior Vice President for Sales and Marketing **Edward S. Hontiveros**
Vice Chairman **Isaac R. Cuartero**
Officer in Charge **Doris Teresa B. Tiu**

All rights reserved.
Except as otherwise indicated by law,
no part of the Philippine Daily Inquirer
may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means,
electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording,
or any information storage and retrieval system,
without permission in writing from the publisher.

'The fourth mountain'

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"WHEN PEACE WAS NOT WOMEN MADE peace," the old axiom goes. But in the process, too many get battered, some beyond healing, says "Impact of Armed Conflict in Mindanao on Women."

The Committee for Asian Women in Bangkok published the Mindanao results, but gave choice kudos of Filipina voices the report. It details how women in Basilan, Jolo, Maguindanao and North Cotabato suffer the scourge with armed clashes.

"Generations of Muslims and Christians in significant areas of Mindanao, lived for the greater part of their lives with the legacy of war," she says. "The toll on life and limb Don Isaid incalculable for ... tens of thousands, predominantly Muslim, particularly women and children."

The report is part of a small flow pouring lately of scientific studies on the lives entwined by clashes from women and children. The University of San Carlos did notably on "Experiences of Cebu Women in women's conflicts."

Who may be the contributors," writes USC's Leny Desamero in "Cebuano in Society" "but "women testified how profound impacts on women, children from war." Like children, "women endure a tortured existence ...Not enough is being done to protect them."

There are differences. A women ended isolated, Cebu's 3,811 km road network links evenly-distributed if lower population. Mindanao, in contrast, a "46-people" almost three-fourths are Christian, many descendants of migrants. Roughly 10 percent are Banguamoro, indigenous people (formerly) make up the rest.

There's the "southern diaspora." Waves of women, children, fathers have crossed to Sabah. "Many who fled political persecution during martial law have surmounted." Now, Indonesian and Filipino migrants are being repatriated by tough immigration curbs. Many have become "TNT" (tago nang tago), stores urges for "undocumented workers."

The report: "In Basilan, all three generations of a month can hundred women in a treadmill of manipulated lives. But many grow poverty and military response would make the three Cebu municipalities studied "any years," Viewpoint noted last June 6.

Look at the classical traumas of Mindanao women. Every year, have seen family members killed, homes razed, livelihoods shattered and forced evacuations. They're dubbed with the gender-free "IDP" Internally-displaced persons). There were 922,000 IDPs in Mindanao's fighting in 2000.

In July, "wearing patches sewn to leaves when the bombs were on. (They) orchestrate conflict and thus (are) able to steal the harvest," Mindanao's writes. "Mindanao's eyes" does not capture nuances of the Lebanon-Iraq dynamic where military interventions has fleeced poultry coops and food stores, Desamero reports.

Post-traumatic stress disorders result from the conflicts. In Cebu, Manila, Bohol, Samar and Leyte both up at midnight dreaming they heard guns cocked. Bohol and Leyte still term life-taken they hear helicopters.

They're like Sakilan, 48, a Maranao Muslim. Her relatives were killed in a grenade attack on a mosque. Helicopter sounds throw Gabila into tremors. "It's war again. We have to pack up," she said three days before she died.

When troops came, Sevrin Edjaen of Jolo, married to an MNLF organizer killed in ambush, moved with her mother to the mountain. She cycle of psychological malaise seems to haunt the family. The son, Israeh, at 6, is shy, reserved to solving habit, hating his schoolmates. Her daughter, 8 del became, in turn, an introvert, father to Sevrin's children.

"Strong party to victim's traumatic aspect wears" triggered Maguindanao's social welfare officer Gloria Estrella's breakdown. Teacher Lorena Antonio Hideyahonwer she were armed men. She was one of 21 held for ransom by Abu Sayyaf bandits, three under Cerry Salapuddin who later ran for and won a seat in Congress. Mature men, women and children were too poor to pay ransom. "They were beaten and shot in rapid succession."

"The phenomenon of young Basilan now militias weaponizing soldiers, police or paramilitary reflects feelings of powerlessness. Government aid is patchy," the study adds. Worse, war sets ones who prize change against their husbands' fathers are themselves.

In critical areas, some non-Muslim teachers, whether single or married, feel compelled to become "wives" of rebels or local users. This "buffers them from other armed men. The "marriage" ends with re-assignment.

Isn't this man's "burden of three renovations" that Max Dolorig spoke of? The three are backwardness, oppression by others and feudal tyranny for women, he added, were burdened by "four renunciation." The first three, plus the fourth and heaviest of all: man/himself.

The result is economist John Kenneth Galbraith's description of women as "servant wife"—but with a vengeance. Women combine work with caring for their families (war widows as sole parents). Those range from sending of dry goods to buying out at bombardments, to feeding combatants. Those in rural areas work as share croppers.

The study cites promising initiatives relevant for "a whole generation of children who have grown up in evacuation centers": peace zones, inter-religious groups cooperating in common projects like hosting programs and education. "Through these people's initiatives and do not depend for their mandate on armed parties."

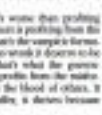
This study is a good read. It can help step blinders for a country fixated by Senator Basil Lacsamo and Juan Ponce Enrile's board now a P90,000 tab for the food of four children catered by restaurateur Fina Lim—a matter of the moment and forcing Mindanao's clashes inflicted, it says, "Women are invisible."

E-mail: jmercado.ejm@gmail.com

Death and taxes

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



A. The idea of exempting the poor from taxes, which is presumably one of GMA's subsidies, isn't just ridiculous, it's ridiculous. It adds insult to injury. The poor do not pay direct taxes anyway. What on earth have they got to pay with? And what on earth can the authorities seize from them if they are found not to be delinquent? But the poor do pay taxes, since the burden for their living expenses would be heavier were it not. They do this each time they buy something. That is what the property owners does each time he buys gasoline, that is what the caretaker's owner does each time she buys food, and that is what the commuter does each time he or she pays fare. Exempt them from taxes? That's a laugh a minute.

The only thing that's worse than profiting from the blundering of others is profiting from the misfortune of others. That's the vampire's forte. It, and the creatures who wreak it deserve to be called bloodsuckers. That's what the governments that battle SBT it profits from the misfortune of others, it sucks the blood of others. It thrives while others suffer, it thrives because others suffer.

There's absolutely no excuse for VAT, particularly with this government. It's an excuse in the way the Spanish police is an excuse, a base supporting feudal labor upon the nation, was an excuse.

At the very least, that's to become the government has done nothing to justify its collection. The corruption the bishops speak of is well known. The loss from the World Bank incidents is it, rating the Philippines the most corrupt country in East Asia, defrauding Indonesia from that unavoidable spin. But more infuriating is the waste of money while the economy growth in pain. Only recently we were regaled with the spectacle of government officials majoring to Las Vegas while the country reeled from the ravages of a typhoon. There was nothing to justify the trip, certainly not the chance for GMA to chat with another dead duck. The only real explanation for it was that Manny Pangilinan was fighting, which reinforced the accusation of GMA calling while Rome burned, the light outpacing gladiatorial combat of the sort Rome offered itself, and the policy of pacifying the oppressed with bread and circus.

Also for us, GMA got away with it again. One is tempted to say she did so by exploiting Pangasinan's blazing victory to cloud everything else. But we never really needed her to do it, we, like the opposition in general, did it to ourselves, applauding the stress over without the bread, giving rise to the bloodlust instead of the fun.

At the very most, there's no excuse for VAT because government has done nothing to justify it. Well, I myself have always suspected that the real reason for VAT quite apart from enlarging the spoils to be distributed to the greedy or sycophantic, was to ensure there would be spoils, large or small, to begin with. Specifically, I suspect it was geared to insulate government from the thirst of the citizenry refusing to pay taxes. Lest we forget, it materialized while graves were was being buffeted by charges of humongous corruption and even more humongous illegitimacy. And while an irate citizenry was threatening to not pay taxes as an entry that had no right to collect, legally because it hadn't been elected, and morally because it had been depositing the money in the wrong pockets.

With VAT, who cares whether the citizen pay taxes? Some or not? That's just gravy. The real collection is indirect from themselves. That robs us also who don't think this regime will budge an inch on VAT short of it unwinding on the brink.

Well, maybe there's an added incentive to fight it tooth and nail.

Dialogue with bishops a must

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IT'S GOOD FOR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER to dialogue with the bishops on the poverty and silliness, as it should be for the latter undressed what the government is trying to do under problems arising from them. Some bishops have warned of a "rising tsunami" portrayed among the poor as they wrestle daily with grinding poverty, but the bishops ought to help explain to the faithful that the dire situation is fueled not just by the rise in most countries around the world, owing to the sharp rise in inflation and natural calamities affecting world food supply, but they can only help calm down the rising discontent if they, too, help address the root causes.

This solution has long advocated: a dialogue between the church and the government, after opposition to the exploitation of our vast mineral resources arose among some bishops. I argued that the church should help explain to the faithful the steps taken by government to maintain the balance between mining activities and protection of the environment, the welfare of the minorities who have claims on the land, etc. The officials should show more active concern by meeting with them and presenting their case.

This dialogue has long advocated: a dialogue between the church and the government, after opposition to the exploitation of our vast mineral resources arose among some bishops. I argued that the church should help explain to the faithful the steps taken by government to maintain the balance between mining activities and protection of the environment, the welfare of the minorities who have claims on the land, etc. The officials should show more active concern by meeting with them and presenting their case.

The government is open to reducing the value-added tax on oil products to help the people cope with rising prices of commodities and transportation. This is good, as the poor are the most vulnerable and show sensibility on the government's part. There is a rising clamor for EVAT reduction in Congress and the issue is bound not to forever remain in the Senate, as it was when the 10% EVAT Law was passed. JDV, who just returned from conferences in Paris and Asuncion, Paraguay, is nothing not only realizes that not a cause all taxes, so that most of all prices should shoot up, but, indeed, they have to be raised further in selling. The administration's problem is that reducing the EVAT would reduce also the funds available for the pro-poor programs it's pushing vigorously for the benefit of the would-be voters, hence the people, and is more preferable than the huge pro-poor subsidies that many fear might only go to certain politicians' followers.

* * *

One thing the churches could do is step up their anti-poverty programs to help the poor, such as soup kitchens and medical clinics in the parishes, then, importantly, the parishes should campaign among the more affluent parishioners to take immediate steps to reach out to the poor, e.g., sending unclothed home with the homeless, restaurants or diners, or giving the supermarket bag basis bigger tips. Some are seriously considered by Cub families and in low of gifts, by which money to donate a specific amount. The collection was raised one to Fr. Jose Francis Thomas to buy rice to be sold at Tulay ng Lahi Mount on Kalayaan Street, Quezon City. Basic are telltale ways to help the poor.

* * *

Over the past weeks, I have been attending birthdays of friends turning 80 and above. The incredibly still productive 80-year-olds include former President Fidel Ramos, the POEA Commissioner Jennito Imperial, former UP President and now Kalayaan College founder and president Jose Abueva and former Vice President Teofisto Guingona. Invited to celebrate the 80th Birthday of Bienvenido and Shirley Rafael-quez Mineta is going into his third Rafaelquez campus dinner to our GMA interview with him that was interrupted by Typhoon "Frenil" this morning at 8 a.m.), while Guingona launched his publication of his autobiography, "Fight for the Filipino," on his 80th birthday last week.

* * *

Two friends recently turned 80: former house President Jose Laurel and former professor Jose Encarnacion, now a Cambodia envoy. This is not all. Two weeks ago the UP Alumni Association gave a "lifetime achievement award" to former Agrarian Reform and economics revered professor to Congress Lorenz Sun Luciano, who walked up to the stage looking every bit glamorous and spry at 89. In her speech, she called on UP "to nourish a culture of excellence, leadership and service." This is how the two previous still-living awardees are: Cato, 93 years old, respectively: Salleo, James R. Benitez and Pedro Tito, 86. Tito, who founded the Iloilo group of handicrafts, will be honored with a book signing concert on July 17 at the Xavier School in Greenhills, to celebrate "75 years as a Jesuit and 54 years as the champion of Filipino street children. Fr. Tito, who turns 94 on Sept. 19, likes to say he's the "oldest working Jesuit" in their exclusive club of 90 and above Jesuits.

What a super productive group all these "young" Filipinos are!

* * *

Tomorrow, Friday, July 14, at 6:30 p.m. the National Museum and the children of lifelong del Carmen Laya and Jean C. Laya will host the inauguration of the Alidou and Jean C. Laya Hall at the National Gallery of Art (the former Legislative Building) on Padre Burgos Drive, near Taft Avenue, Manila. To celebrate the occasion, former Cultural Minister Jaime C. Laya, the eldest of their children, has lent paintings from his personal collection, which will be on display for a limited period. Jaime and Alidou Laya were early graduates of the UP and American universities, who devoted their lives to serving the Philippine educational system. Jean, a prolific short-story writer, also played a pivotal role in the country's elementary division superintendent in Pangasinan and division superintendent in Bataan, while Alidou became assistant superintendent in Manila and director of the School Health and Welfare. Under the Department of Education. Among Mr. Laya's works are "Basic English: Tagalog and Tagalog-English Vocabulary" in 1946, they founded Kayumanggi Press and Publishing, which published many of the first to go into publishing children's books.

Rampant crime in the country's NGO capital

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Carmi P. Dayo

BOARD WORRIED AND LIVING IN THE so-called NGO capital of the Philippines are up in arms because of the rampant criminality in the area.

Dumlao, UD's Student's Village East and West and Barangays Commonwealth, Payatas and neighboring areas, home to dozens of national and international NGOs (non-government organizations), is a prime spot for criminals who prey mostly on women working the streets to and from their offices or business. This area is right behind Quezon City Hall.

Almost every female NGO worker in this prime address has a crime story to tell about herself, her co-employees, friends or neighbors. Cell phones and bag snatching, theft and robberies, and worst, rape, name it. Not a few had had not one, but several encounters with criminal elements in the Quezon City area. The perpetrators are mostly on motorcycles.

Worse of a shame that in this place where civil society thrives the devil also thrives. And yes, the streets in this area have names that describe positive PR-prone traits such as Malinggap, Masikhain, Matahon, Magiting, Maginhawa-magiliw. Look at the streets:

Meralco rates cheaper for small consumers

LETTERS

SETTLING OFF NUMBERS DOES NOT MAKE sentiment true. On the contrary, as the saying goes, "Garbage in, garbage out."

I refer to Dave Diaz's letter "Meralco's distribution charge highest in the Philippines." (Opinion, 6/28/08). Whoever gave him the data for that letter did him a disservice. By simply going to the Energy Regulatory Commission, he could have found out that, unlike other electric distributors in the Philippines, Meralco's distribution rates were designed by the government to favor small consumers, that is, small consumers are charged lower distribution rates, while those consuming more are charged higher rates. It is called socialized pricing.

More specifically, this means that the distribution rate to a Meralco residential customer using 100 kWh/month is only P1.37/kWh, among the lowest in the Philippines.

For a consumer using 200 kWh/month or less, the distribution rate in Cebu is P1.67/kWh, in Davao P1.61/kWh and in Cagayan de Oro P1.61/kWh—all higher than Meralco's. Meralco's residentials using up to 200 kWh/month account for 77 percent of all its residential customers.

At least, Diaz got it right that Meralco's distribution rate for customers using 400 kWh/month is P2.44/kWh. Maybe Diaz knows this because he probably uses more than 400kWh/month, which means that he belongs to the richest 7 percent of Meralco's residential customers. However, he is dead wrong in saying that this is the highest in the country. There are at least 27 other distributors whose residential rates are higher than that.

The rest of his letter appears to be similarly riddled with wrong information. Diaz should check his facts first before issuing any statement to the public.

—JOE B. TALBARIHAN, manager, Corporate Communications, Meralco

Not in Ateneo de Manila's character and language

THE ATENEO REFERENDUM, DIRECT OR INdirect, in Rina Jimenez-David's July 1 editorial were easily disappointing. Please allow us to address these individually:

1. Marking of Ateneo's opponents on the DXT side for being "pinoy." One school officials do not communicate with behavior. We refrain our students and alumni to compare themselves well. But tauntng does take place, and every school is on the giving and receiving end. Although we at Ateneo take such things in stride, we abhor the base connotations, insults and name-calling, especially since there are young, impressionable children in attendance. As a responsible media practitioner, David would perhaps call out to her fellow alumni and alumnae, and to UAAP sports fans in general, to channel their passions and energies to rancorous cheering and clapping instead.

2. Untrue pushovers in streamers and placards. Ateneans is not confined to particular modes like streamers. UST. And if she had been at UST games against other opponents, she would have observed that the culprits behind that offensive material belong to another school, not to Ateneo. If and when we spot such offensive materials produced by our fans, we still have them put down immediately. Its check with impartial sources like the dynamic Collegian security personnel and ushers.

3. Langosse of other institutions. If she were attending to Ateneo as one of those "office commissar" with a huge langosse for athletes, may we inform her that our Athletics Office provides equitable, allotic assistance, al. Lawrence for our varsity players of various sports disciplines. Any emphasis come from the kindness and generosity of our alumni supporters. The university works hand in hand with our boosters for the channeling of more donations to other teams, as part of our program to become competitive in more sports disciplines.

David's patronl, if misinformed, reassures signal that another spirited UAAP season is upon us. We do acknowledge and laud her ability to react for its decades long general excellence in sports. But we deplore her resorting to unfair characterizations of our school and fans as a preamble to her final-rating announcement. No need, really, to promote this at the expense of our school or any other's.

It is sad that its here signed for alumni support, she had to portray her fine university as the victim of imagined slurs. We are sure that Promotions do not subscribe to being portrayed as the object of pushovers, as indeed they deserve our respect.

As a footnote, the term "pinoy" is a derivative of "Julius" (Magdangal), the name of a fine and much-awarded TV and movie personality who was tapped before to host a program on the activities of President Macapagal-Arroyo. The term does not therefore mean "poor and luckless," as neither applies to Julius. A more correct definition—considering that a Tagalog lexicon is unavailable—must be "respected and credible."

We humbly hope for a future portrayal of our school from a respected columnist and a newspaper with a high circulation.

—ROMEO A. OLAVERIO JR., Director for Alumni Relations

HOWEVER YOU LOOK AT IT,
NO OTHER NEWSPAPER
IS READ MORE THAN US.

Nielsen Media Index Ranks Results. Figure prince that PDI is number 1 nationwide with almost 50% readership among leading broadsheet readers.

Synovate Media Atlas Ranking Results. Numbers show that PDI is number 1 nationwide among the national newspaper readers by almost 10,000 Total Nation Readers.

Both Nielsen Media Index and Synovate Media Atlas
reveal that we are the leader in broadsheet readership
across all socio-economic classes. And we are proud
to have achieved this exceptional recognition.
But we share the honor with you – our readers,
advertisers, and partners who made all the difference.

INQUIRER

Dare to ask. Be an Inquirer.

Sources: Nielsen Media Index, Q1 2008, All People 10+, National Urban Philippines and Synovate Nationwide Urban Media Atlas Survey, January to December 2007

INQUIRER Southern Luzon
Aurea Cielj Warnito G. Solmirano Editor Jun Bandayrel

TRICYCLE driver Carlito Pano rifts up LPG cylinder installed at the rear of his sidecar.

LPG-fed tricycles ply Lucena streets

By Dellie Mallari Jr.
Lucena City

WITH PRICES OF petroleum products skyrocketing in the last three months, several tricycle drivers in Lucena City have started using the much cheaper and environment-friendly liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) as transport fuel.

"After more than half a month of using LPG, I'm now beginning to feel the benefits," Carlito Pano, president of the Lucena Tricycle Drivers and Operators Association-North Section, said.

He used to spend P250 to P300 for a 12-hour gas consumption daily, Pano said. Now, "I only spend an average of P80 a day for this LPG fuel. I also know that I'm now doing something good for the environment."

A three-kilogram LPG tank, safely placed at the rear of the sidecar, costs only P200 and is good for four days. An LPG outlet is located on the driver's right side.

Though he owns the tricycle unit, Pano declares a P120 boundary from his daily earning. Since he shifted from gasoline to LPG, he has been earning about P300 daily from barely P180. Lucena's 3,000 tricycle drivers have been using gasoline fuel.

LPG is filled in tank through a gas valve with a pressure gauge.

LPG motor duplicate cuts the flow of fuel to motorcycle engine.

Pano's fuel shifting

LPG, a byproduct of crude oil, is a mixture of propane, butane and other derivatives. It comes through a gaze valve with a pressure gauge connected to the tank. A hose, similar to that used in an LPC stove and connected to a regulator, runs through a chlorophyll which converts LPG flow to the motorcycle engine.

Pano carries an extra full tank at the back of his tricycle in case he runs out of fuel on the road.

"Contrary to popular belief, LPG-powered tricycles encounter no difficulty in starting their engines," he said.

Pano has asked the national government to help tricycle drivers defray the cost of shifting to other fuels.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has ordered the serving unit of P1 billion to help owners of jeepneys, buses and taxis to convert their diesel or gasoline-fed engines into LPG-powered vehicles through loans from the Development Bank of the Philippines and Postal Bank.

Funding for the conversion program will come from the 2-percent value-added tax collected on petroleum products, which is expected to reach P10 billion this year because of soaring world oil prices.

MC HOME DEPOT
In Partnership with
PLUMBING WORKS 4 DELTA
July 1 to 15, 2008
Offers On The Spot Discount
PLUMBING ITEMS & ACCESSORIES
Angle Valve, Gland Valve
Foot Valve, Gate Valve, Tank Fittings,
Flexible Hose, P-Trap, Floor Drain,
Roof Drain, Manhole Cover, Grease
Trap & Kitchen Sink
TOILET / BATH & SHOWER
Kitchen Faucet, Lavatory Faucet
Concealed Bibb, Exposed Bibb
PIPES & FITTINGS
Sanitary / Waterline
Pipes & Fittings
PVC Pipes, Elbows, Wye,
Coupling, Tee, Manifolds
Adapter, Cap, Flange
BATHROOM ACCESSORIES
Paper & Soap Holders
Towel Bar, Towel Ring
Toothbrush Holder
Robe Hook, Towel Rack
VESBO
SANIWA
Regina
MC HOME DEPOT Fortbonifacio
MC HOME DEPOT Ortigas

"Providing Best Books at Best Prices for Quality Education"
Association of Booksellers for the Academe and the Professions
presents the
12th Philippine Academic Book Fair
and the
Catholic Book Fair
July 8-13, 2008 • 10:00 A.M. - 8:00 P.M.
Megatrade Hall 1, 5th Level, Building II
SM Megamall, EDSA, Mandaluyong City
Co-Organized by Primetrade Asia, Inc.

Supreme Court of the Philippines
Judicial and Bar Council
Manila

ANNOUNCEMENT

The JBC announces that the following are applicants for different judgeship positions:

REGIONAL TRIAL COURT (REGION VI) BACOLOD CITY, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL; (Br. 49) MIRANDA, Armando P. ARLES, Hector D. BELISLA, Arty Maria R. DEL PILAR, Michelle D. DEMONTEVERDE, Francisco J. DEMONTEVERDE, Ma. Lorna P. GEOLAGON, Rizen C. JAVIER, Peter John U. MAGLEBANG, Elaine P. MANERA, Norberto G. OCTAVIANO, Hermogenes G. PENUELA, Ronel D. ROJO, Remigio V. SINUERO, Jessica P. TENORIO, Elaine M. KALUBO, ARLAN (Br. 51) MIANAMAUSON, Kenneth John N. ARBIS, Jeniance A. BARTOLOME, Nelson L. CALABRIA, Lucy Ann S. CASALAN, Romeo M. DIZON, Rodolfo R. GUILLEN, Jose Francisco P. LEONSON, Rommel L. MANERA, Wilfredo D. OBIEFAL, Ronald O. ORFALDA, Freddie A. PASAYATAN, Lourdes T. PATINDAY, Raymundo Jr. P. SOQUISTA, Emmanuel L. SUN-LAMO, Jesus D. TAPLAC, Glenn G. TORRA, Robert N. TOLENTINO, Ma. Minda D. (REGION VII) MANDAUE CITY, CEBU (Br. 56) DIATAGA, Ria S. EVEN, Fred R. GALAMGAM, Teresita A. GESTOPA, Leonardo Jr. C. GO, Glenda C. MONTEVERDE, Hermilea G. ONG, Manuel P. OTADOY, Rodolfo Jr. L. PARENTE, Florencio T. SANCHEZ, Anita L. BATAAN (Br. 87) CITY MEDICAL CENTER (Br. 22) ENOY, Tolomeo A. EZON, Rodolfo E. JAVIER, Bernard C. OCADOY, Eusebio Jr. L. (REGION VIII) NAVAL, BILIRAN (Br. 16) NABAVRE, Edgar A.

MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT IN CITIES (MTCC) (REGION VI) KABANKALAN, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL; ARGENTO, Evelyn D. FERNANDEZ, Cyrenian J. GAVIDEL, Marvelo G. RIVERO, Benjamin B. MANAAY, Lowrence Jr. P. MODEL, Rizaldo Jr. C. MAKALO, Jose Ramon M. SARGARIA, Ma. Alexandra U. URIARTE, Ma. Christy E. UYCHIN, Marvin G. YBAÑEZ, Ronald M. (REGION VII) LAPU-LAPU CITY, CEBU; BARRIDO-LOY, Prospero A. EALDERON, Lucia D. F. CASTRO, Rhea Ann T. GARCIANO, Allan Floro Cruz B. IBONES, Virgilio S. MANTILLA, Ramon Jr. M. PERATAO, Rosemarie S. PEQUIT, Marnie N. TAGAAN, Jesus Rodrigo T. TIMBOL, Pedro Jr. A.

MUNICIPAL CIRCUIT TRIAL COURT (MCTC) (REGION VII) TERESA-BARAS, RIZAL; ANGELES, Gerasyann A. BALAGAT-FELICEN, Kenneth A. CALIBO, Emmanuel P. CRUZ, Maria F. GOMTES, Joy Mona P. JALAGBO, Adolfo Jr. BENEDICTA, Ma. Theresa G. PATAPAT, Diosdado Jr. RODRIGUEZ, Jeanette L. NOMLIMY, Jessie S. SANTOS, Joselito M. SATOR, Antonio Jr. S. VISTA, Ma. Rosario A.; VITOR, Wenie C.

MUNICIPAL CIRCUIT TRIAL COURT (MCTC) (REGION V) MANEGRON-DALUG, MANAVIS; SIERRA, Gina G.

The public may submit sworn complaints, written report, or opposition against any of the aforesaid applicants not later than 18 JULY 2008 (Friday) to the JBC Secretariat, 2nd Flr. Commercial Bldg., Supreme Court, Padre Faura St., Manila (Telefax 552-9518; Tel. No. 552-9566; e-mail address jbc_supremecourt@yahoo.com.ph).

All applicants for judicial positions must submit to the JBC ASAP via fax, mail or e-mail their updated JBC Form 1 (Revised September 2007), proof of Filipino citizenship and 2008 Certificate(s) of Good Moral Character and Police Clearances.

10 July 2008

MA. LOIDA S. VILLARAMA
Clerk of Court & JBC
Ex-Officio Secretary

Across the NATION

CHR probes raps vs Aussie mine firm

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IS LOOKING into alleged human rights violations committed by mining firms operating in the provinces of Quirino and Nueva Vizcaya against indigenous peoples residing in the areas.

The commission has initiated an investigation following reports that houses of indigenous peoples in areas where the Australian-based mining company Oceana Gold (Philippines) Inc. was operating were being demolished despite opposition from the community.

The demolitions were being carried out without court order and without the mining firm providing relocation sites for displaced families, according to the fact-finding report of environmental and human rights groups working against mining.

CHR Chair Leila de Lima said the commission would soon issue its findings and recommendations that will safeguard people living in areas where mining is prevalent.

The team affected families were declaring in Barangay Didipio in Nueva Vizcaya, where at least 187 homes have already been knocked down since December last year, according to the report.

The groups—including the Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates, the Nueva Vizcaya Mines and the Legal Rights and Natural Resources Center-Kasama sa Kalikasan (LRC-KsK)—submitted the report during a dialogue with De Lima on Tuesday.

They said the report, entitled "Sweet the Escalating Violence in Didipio, Seek Justice for Human Rights Violations," served as a complaint against the mining company, which has allegedly allowed a contingent from the Philippine National Police inside its property.

"In light of the findings of the report, we ask the CHR to urge to the mentioning attention to Barangay Didipio to be able to safeguard the rights of the people as evidence is perceived to escalate since it has said safety will not be re-established," according to the LRC-KsK.

They also requested that the CHR look into reported killings, threats, harassments and harassments in relation to the ongoing demolition.

Last month, a barangay captain was shot dead by still unidentified guns. The groups said the murder only showed how violence in the area was shooting up due to the mining operations in the community.

Meanwhile, De Lima added that she has directed the CHR regional office to conduct a follow-up investigation on the plight of the Didipio residents since her office has already received an initial report on the case.

GermanGold has recently announced it was suspending work in the area as a result of lack of funds.

HOT BORACAY
The white sand beaches of the island Garden City of Samal could easily be mistaken for those in Boracay Island, the world-famous, but now-crowded, strip of beach resort in Aklan province.

GMA aide says NorthRail firm to resume work

ANGELES CITY—A China-owned company that backed out of the Chinese-funded Northrail project last February will return to work possibly in August, Edgardo Pamintuan, newly appointed president of the North Luzon Railways Corp. (NLRC) said on Wednesday.

"They will be back," Pamintuan said, referring to the China National Machinery and Equipment Corp. (CNMEC). "I am sure. I'm very optimistic because I already talked with contractual officials [of China] in the Philippines [last Sunday]."

Pamintuan, who is also chief of the Subic-Clark-Alliance for Rapid Transit Development Council and Luzon Urban Rehousing Region, said he intervened to resolve the issue on orders of President Macapagal-Arroyo on June 30.

"After our 10 minutes of discussion, she smarted and she, 'If we had our caches, we could have finished the project in two years and a half,'" he said, recalling their conversation.

Past accord

The project was conceptualized through a memorandum signed by former President Fidel Ramos and Ding Jiuxin Chief of State in 1994. Ramos provided a loan of $400 million for the Caloocan City-City of Malolos (Malacañang) phase, for which the NLRC made a first drawdown of $105 million on Sept. 29, 2004.

Starting January 2005, the NLRC, a subsidiary of the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA), has been paying $300,000 monthly for the loan's interest. The BCDA and the NLRC have put up a counterpart of $107.876 million to the project. The National Housing Authority had spent about P6 billion to relocate around 20,000 families out of the old tracks of the Philippine National Railways Corp., where the railway system will be built.

In 2006, the Chinese government increased the loan to $1 billion to enable the Philippine government to extend the Northrail to the Clark Freeport in Pampanga where the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport is located.

Pamintuan said he was meeting the Chinese ambassador to discuss the final details in the resumption of work by the CNMEC.

No work

His earlier inspection on Tuesday showed that 160 CNMEC employees, who are involved in survey and design work, had returned to China. Only 25 have remained but were not working.

Based on documents with CNMEC and NLRC officials, Pamintuan said the contractor decided to abandon the project because it "refused to build on a piecemeal basis."

According to him, the NLRC has not fixed the alignment (on which the new tracks will be built) from right-of-way problems.

For instance, the foundations of several bridges have not been demolished.

"The Chinese said they need explosives. The NLRC people got P18 million for that and gave that to the [Armed Forces of the Philippines]. The AFP said their procurement process slowed down. I said, that must not be the case. They can fasttrack by doing a relief purchase," Pamintuan said.

On top of these problems, the entire project has not taken off because, he said, the CNMEC and the NLRC have "not come up with a schedule."

"The design has not been approved. Only 20 km out of 84 km have been drained," Benedicto Ortega, Inquirer General Luzon

NEWSBRIEFS

■ GAPAS CITY

City in mourning

TARLAC CITY (authorities of this anniversary last Friday, flying flags at half-staff to mourn for the 120 fishermen who died or remained missing at the height of Typhoon "Frank."

Mayor Salvador Socatelo said the city expressed its condolences on purpose to ease heads instead for families of the fishermen.

"The people are grieving," he said.

City fact-finders marked the city anniversary—Many for the 120 fishermen and the inauguration of a new two-story school building.

Celso P. Gamar, Inquirer Visayas

■ DIGOS CITY

Vietnamese shot dead

SUMMARY: Hiding motorcycles shot and killed a Vietnamese and wounded another yesterday, police said.

Insp. Anthony Pabua, city police chief, said the Vietnamese, identified only as Nguyen, 27, was on a bicycle with his brother, Trinh Loc, when the gunmen attacked them.

The brothers were among thousands of refugees who fled Vietnam as local people and took shelter in Pulaisan. They had been selling dry goods to this city.

Orlando B. Dinoy, Inquirer Mindanao

■ TAGUM CITY

3 men held for bus rob

THREE men were arrested after they shot and wounded the driver of a bus during a robbery in Carmen, Davao del Norte.

Senior Insp. Jimmy Palomar, Carmen police chief, said a fourth suspect is being hunted. The driver, Sonny Lopez, was brought to a hospital.

Nicolas Lim, Inquirer Mindanao

■ TACLOBAN CITY

Loans for 'Frank' victims

THE SOCSARGEN Services Insurance System (SSS) in Eastern Visayas said it was accepting emergency loan applications from members suffering from flooding in the region as a result of Typhoon "Frank."

Romana Lacuna, assistant vice president (VP) regional manager, said members could borrow up to 80 percent of their accumulated savings.

Joey A. Gabinbo, Inquirer Visayas

■ LUCENA CITY

Soldiers seize lumber

SOLDIERS seized some P50,000 worth of illegal lumber in Real, Quezon, the military said.

Capt. Lee Santiago, spokesperson of the South Luzon Command, said the lumber had been in a jeep that was intercepted in a village in Real.

Santiago said the illegal cargo was brought to a naval base owned by Infanta town for safekeeping.

Delfin Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

Valderama; 75

GLORIA Cruz Valderama died at noon on July 6 in Quezon City. She was 75.

She is left behind her sister Benedicta; children Edith, Visayan and Nina Ayos, Renato and Mangas, Charito and Lyn, Dolly and Gerry Polentes, Rolando Duque, Tita Bulan and Mila Santos, Egay and Nonoy, and Bong and Amy; and 23 grandchildren.

Her remains lie at the family residence at 167 Barangay Municipality, San Rafael, Bulacan.

She will be buried today at the town cemetery after a 2 p.m. Mass at St. John parish church.

'Frank' leaves Iloilo fish industry poorer by ₱400M

By Norman P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—ILOILO'S FISHING INDUSTRY faces its biggest challenge yet as it rebuilds from the damage estimated at over P400 million, brought by Typhoon "Frank."

Industry players said it would take five to six months to recover from the damage after the worst flooding in Panay Island.

Melchora Toledo, provincial agriculturist, said the flooding brought "very significant" losses to fish producers, especially fishponds operators who fed dikes and lishponds to flood.

Tons of ready-to-harvest fish stocks were lost after the fishponds overflowed.

Ouriel Villaluz, secretary of the Iloilo Fish Producers Association, said Iloilo has about 10,200 hectares of fishponds.

Villaluz said the average annual production in Iloilo is about 8.1 thousand tons of bangus or milkfish.

However, he said, production this year was likely to fall to 2,885.

The Iloilo Provincial Agronomy Office (PAO) said the damage incurred by the fish industry was at least P407 million.

Those include at least 19,044.5 million of damage and losses in aquaculture and P112.8 million in steam-boat fishing.

Toledo said fishponds, mostly of milkfish, bore the brunt of the damage because the typhoon struck when stocks were about to be harvested.

Western Visayas is among the country's top producer of bangus, mainly coming from Iloilo.

The cost of losses in fish stocks alone reached P347 million.

The hardest hit areas were the northern Iloilo towns of Barotac (40,000 ha) and Ajuy. Also hit hard were the towns of Banate, Nueva, Anilao, Estancia, Batuan and Lemery.

Toledo said the extent of the damage was the worst he has seen in the 27 years that he has been working in the agriculture sector.

Villaluz said in his hometown Estancia alone, only 2/3 of the total 350 hectares of fishponds survived the floods.

"The storm struck at the peak of harvest season. This is the biggest challenge we have faced so far," he said.

Villaluz said it would take at least six months for the industry to recover even as repairs of damaged dikes and structures are already ongoing.

Toledo said operators also fear that more losses would come with the lack of fries and fingerlings because these were also lost when the fishponds overflowed. Operators have to get these from hatcheries or must be those bred from the wild starting August and September.

He said the earliest harvest would be in December because it would take three to four months for the fingerlings to mature.

Toledo said he expected an increase in prices of fish, especially milkfish, which sells from P110 and P150 per kg.

3 DENR men sacked for loss of log haul

TUGUEGARAO CITY—THREE OFFICIALS of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Cagayan were relieved following the loss of two trucks loaded with 10,000 board feet of assorted wood products earlier this month.

Clarence Bagalso, DENR executive director in Cagayan, said he ordered the relief of Antonello Ibasco, provincial environment and natural resources officer (Penro); and Dionisio Baldovaraq, Gremio Pagsanjan forestry specialist, for the loss of the wood products.

The three officials were temporarily assigned to Bagalso's office.

Bagalso appointed Jovelyn Alfonso Calimag to replace Ibasco and Jovance Madon Aguilar to replace Baraq.

Bagalso said he was also appealing his case to Environment Secretary Lito Atienza, Assistant Undersecretary Ernesto Arellano for reinstatement.

Bagalso ordered an investigation of the disappearance of the trucks loaded with ordered wood products inside the Regional Penro yard in Barangay Carig Sur here on June 22.

He said he would prosecute environment officials who may be found guilty of connivings with at least seven armed men who allegedly entered the Cotabato-Tuguegarao depository yard.

Arms earlier reported to Bagalso that the armed men threatened to kill the security guard. He said he ordered the police but no one was arrested. Villamor Haspa Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon

Center for Continuing Education

Center for Entrepreneurship & Management Education, Inc.

invite you to

This is an intensive 10-day training program designed for entrepreneurs, managers and supervisors of small and medium-sized enterprises who want a strategic framework to improve their business. The program, which is in collaboration with the Center for Entrepreneurship and Management Education, Inc., aims to support the Ateneo Graduate School of Business' anniversary theme, Go Country to Go Business.

July 21 - August 15, 2008
Ateneo Graduate School of Business
20 Rockwell Drive, Rockwell Center
Makati City

For details and registration, please call Ateneo CCE at ACE Francis de Leon - 926 0042 Ana Montano - 437 3500
Marivic Catacag - 840 1134 Perlie Bello - 441 3647
Email us at: cce-ateneo@ateneo.edu or ace_mdmc@yahoo.com
You may also visit our WEBSITE ON ONLINE at www.ace.ateneo.edu

Supported by:

BDO NEGROSYO

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendrez
Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Ochoa

Late SPORTS

SBP set to follow US cage program

By Jose Navarro

A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM INCITED after USA Basketball is being adopted by the BAP-Gatorade Basketball Association.

Executive director Noli Eala yesterday said BAP-BSP is on the verge of putting up a national team organizing committee composed of officials from top commercial and collegiate leagues and the best coaching minds in Philippine basketball.

The committee will be made up of representatives from the Philippine Basketball Association, Philippine Basketball League, UAAP, NCAA, Cebu Schools Athletic Foundation Inc. (Cesafi) and at least three coaches with winning traditions in their respective leagues.

Eala declined to identify the coaches but a source said former men's team and Talk 'N Text coach Chot Reyes, La Salle's Franz Pumaren, Norman Black of Ateneo and Jerry Codiñera are candidates.

The former PBA commissioners said the organizing committee will take care of the screening and screening of players and coaches as well as the training, funding and selection of team members for elite tournaments.

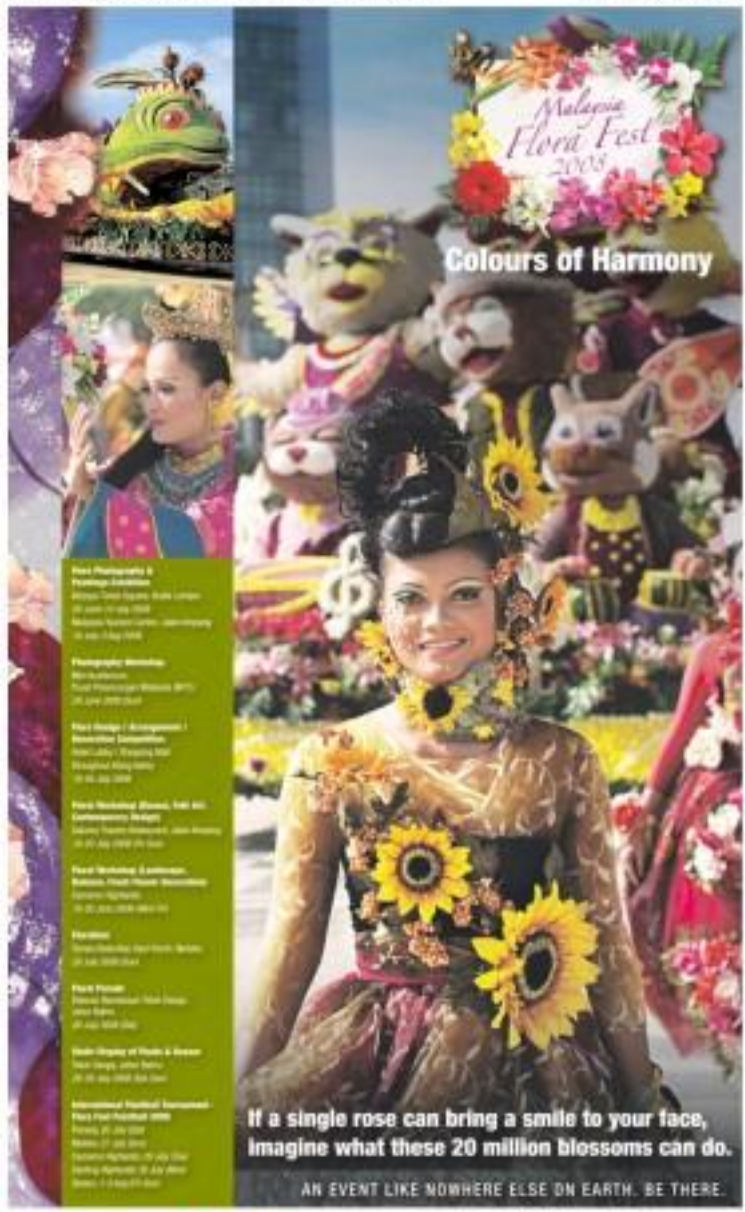
"Hopefully, this will systematize the formation of the national team," said Eala, who will act as ex-officio chairman of the committee.

BAP-GBP competitions coordinator Jerad Bernie Atienza will be in charge of the committee, whose chief aim is to develop, manage and coordinate programs for the national team.

Patterned after the structure of USA Basketball, the SBP national team organizing committee will serve as the backbone of the organization's thrust to bring the country back to the international basketball scene.

Eala said the committee is targeting the 2010 World Championships in Istanbul, Turkey and 2012 London Olympics.

STA.-LUCIA'S Dennis Espino (left) and Manila's John Fortuna race for the loose ball.



SLR 5, Pals forge playoff

By Marvey R. Castillo

ANTIPOLO—WITH ITS BACK AGAINST the wall, Sta. Lucia went into its knockout game against Manila last night armed with the formula that resulted in its most recent success: **Relieving to insult.**

Down by 11 at one point in the first half, the Realtors caught fire in the final eye-gummy (it's 979-96) victory that ended the Manila Aces' Greater Manila Cup reign and kept Sta. Lucia's hopes for a second-straight PBA title alive.

Joseph Yeo scored 19 of his career-high 27 points in the second half and Kelly Williams rebounded from a 2-of-11 shooting clip in the first two periods to carry the Realtors to the second-ending finish in the one coin you decided (and phone at the Ynares Center here.

"I just told the boys that we had to believe in ourselves," coach Boyet Fernandez said later. "We had to have the belief that we can get past the wild card, that we could get past Alaska in this game."

Sta. Lucia, which used the "Relieve" bombery in its best-of-seven title series with Purefoods in the Philippine Cup, now faces Talk 'N Text in the duel for the last quarterfinal berth.

Fight-marred match

Jimmy Alapag had 26 points, including six backbreaking triples, and added six rebounds and six assists while Mac Cardona chipped in 15, six boards and seven feets as the Phone Pals eliminated the Purefoods TJ Giants, 98-93 in a fight-marred second game.

Terrence Leather was ejected from the match because of two technical fouls. Leather and Jeaches Gabrador got into a skirmish with 9:26 left and both benches emptied as a total of seven technical fouls—three from Talk 'N Text and four from Purefoods—were called.

And it could prove costly for the Phone Pals, as Leather was playing just his second game after being ejected and fined also for two technical fouls in their game against Barangay Ginebra earlier this week.

"We caught a good break today because their import was not 100 percent," said Talk 'N Text coach Chot Reyes, referring to Fields (Rudy Fields, who—despite a leg cramps—is expected to play for the Gin Kings tonight). "I just hope we don't get that bad break if Leather will be suspended on Friday."

That breakout game is set tomorrow with the winner advancing to the quarterfinals against Ginebra.

The Realtors came into the contest sealed as the ninth team and were way off the form that gave them the all-Filipino crown. They also did not play that well for majority of the first half as they were trailed 52-45.

Malaysia Truly Asia

Aplus METRO
Editor Ester G. Dipasupil
Tell us your feelings: inquirer.net/metrosingle/submit e-mail: yc_metro@inquirer.com.ph

DID YOU KNOW

ON THIS DATE of July 7, 1933—when most of José Rizal's ashes in Dapitan spread—a group of Filipinos, including Andres Bonifacio, Valentin Diaz, Teodoro Plata, Ladislao Diwa and Dominador Arellano, met secretly in a house on what is now Cabildo (Intramuros) in Manila to form the Katipunan, an underground movement that sought to secure Philippine independence from Spain. *Cyrill Gonzalez, Inquirer Research*

Solon's bill imposes fine on owners of sex videos

Rise in cases of videotaped 'private acts' cited

By Christian V. Esguerra

VOYEURS, BE WARNED.

Possession of video recordings showing "private acts" could get you into trouble.

A party-list lawmaker has filed a bill seeking to penalize people who "knowingly possess" video recordings of "private acts, including, but not limited to sexual acts."

Bohol Rep. (now) Tiwig's House Bill 6315, that also covers those who replay such clips or share them with others, imposes on violators a penalty of up to six years imprisonment and a fine that could reach P500,000.

"Lately, a number of obscene sexual acts or other pornographic materials have been exhibited and shown even the listeners and were shared (through) other electronic gadgets like mobile phones, much to the humiliation of the victims," Tiwig said in the bill's explanatory note.

"Evil-spirited individuals continue to distribute the image of the offended party by recording the private acts of lovers or partners, usually without the consent of either party," he added.

Deplorable act

"This is the worst thing you can do to a woman," Tiwig said in a statement. "Not only you destroy her by your deplorable physical act, you also strip her of all remaining honor, self-respect, social standing, and hope by spreading the inhuman act in the Internet or mobile phones for all the world to see."

Reminding a 17-year-old roaming student from Cavite province, an alleged victim of a gang rape—an incident which was videotaped by her attackers through a cell phone camera—made this appeal to anyone who gets hold of the video: "Don't view it, don't share it, please."

Ordeal

In a press conference in Quezon City yesterday, the victim narrated her ordeal which began on Feb. 14, when a friend, and her boyfriend invited her to a house in Dasmariñas, Cavite.

The house was supposedly owned by a man who was looking for a girlfriend.

The victim said in her four-page complaint that when they got to the house, they were joined by three other men, allegedly college students like her.

After a few drinks, the victim said she lost consciousness and found herself in another room where she said she was raped repeatedly.

All the while, one of the suspects was videotaping the scene.

Out of fear and shame, the victim said she kept the incident to herself until a friend told her two months later that she had seen a video clip of the incident on a schoolmate's cell phone.

The clip soon circulated among students at the victim's school. When parents here got hold of it, adding it to the growing number of "sex scandal" videos in the country.

"It's tantamount to double rape," Rep. Lira Maria of Gabriela said in yesterday's media briefing.

The video clip, however, enabled the victim to identify the suspects.

A 17-YEAR-OLD student, an alleged victim of a gang rape, says she ended up a victim twice over when video clips of the incident were circulated through cellular phones. INQUIRER

REAL ESTATE SEMINAR & REVIEW
In preparation for the October 5, 2008 Real Estate Broker's Licensure Exam !!
Choose from any sessions below: 11 Time: 1:15 to 6:45 PM
Mon: Mon's Real Classics 2 Mini –Jul 28, Aug 4, 11, 18, 25 & Sept 22
Thurs: Mon's Rare Gateway, Cubao QC –Jul 31, Aug 7, 14, 21, 28 & Sept 25
Sun: Mon's Real Classics 2 Mini –Jul 26, Aug 2, 9, 16, 23 & Sept 30
Still with Tuesday evening section - 6:30 to 10:00 PM
Mon's Real Classics 2 Mini –Jul 29, Aug 5, 12, 19, 26, & Sept 23
For details call 891-0838 or 891-0883 or simply text your fax no. or email address to CPM 0918-428-9174 or 0921-833 3433 or email urbanre@pacific.net.ph or urbanre.ph@gmail.com
URBAN INSTITUTE OF REAL ESTATE
"home of topnotchers & successful brokers"
1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th placers and more than 80% passing rate in the May 07 broker's board exam!

GET READY TO ROCK THE ICE!
Feld Entertainment® and Kenny Ortega Present
Disney
HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL
THE ICE TOUR
www.highschoolmusicaltheicetour-asia.com
The ultimate celebration of music and moves from Disney's High School Musical and High School Musical 2
JULY 11 - 20, 2008
BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!
© Disney
TICKETNET
FOR TICKET INQUIRIES, CALL TICKETNET AT 911.5555
OR LOG ON TO WWW.TICKETNET.COM.PH

Wilkins
DISTILLED DRINKING WATER
Pure & safe without a doubt.
HOTLINE AND 5 GALLON DELIVERIES:
813-2653 (METRO MANILA)
1-800-1-888-2653 (PROVINCIAL AREAS)

Valentine's Day 'bombers' conviction upheld

By Lala B. Salaverria

THE COURT OF APPEALS (CA) affirmed the multiple counts conviction of three Abu Sayyaf Group members linked to the Valentine's Day bombing in 2005, but reduced their death sentences to reclusion perpetua (life imprisonment) without eligibility for parole.

In a decision handed down on June 30, the court said there was enough evidence to uphold the Makati City regional trial court's guilty verdict on Lintod Sahiron, Angelo Trinidad and Rolando Abchavitoy for multiple murder and multiple frustrated murder.

The three were accused of bombing an IPEC1 bus being transported on the southbound lane of Ayala Avenue near the MRT station in the evening of Feb. 14, 2005.

Sahiron and Trinidad were said to have planted the bomb in the vehicle while Rolando reportedly provided the training for making the explosive.

Four people died in the incident while more than 60 others were injured.

The appellate court threw out Sahiron and Trinidad's argument that they decided to plead guilty "recklessly" because the trial court had failed to explain to them the consequences of their action.

It said that during their arraignment, the charge sheet was read to them in Filipino because they agreed that it was a language they understood. It added that the two entered the guilty plea after they were questioned separately on whether or not they understood the charges against them.

"Their pleas of guilty were voluntary. There is no indication in the records that their counsel coerced or influenced them, nor is it fair for judge themselves were any physical harm or placed them under a state of duress. They manifested full understanding of the consequences thereof," the ruling penned by Justice Edgardo Sundiam said.

In also ordered out that the trial court required the prosecution to present evidence on prove the accused's guilt and their exact participation.

"Hence, even without their admission of guilt, accused-appellants' conviction can still be sustained based on the presentation of the evidence," it added.

The appellate court also said it was not convinced by the contention that the witnesses against the three, including accused turned state witness Gigapal Bantuh Asali, could not be believed.

It said that even though his testimony Eliezer Sindato did not say that he saw the men bringing any package or article aboard the bus, it does not mean that the two men did not bring the explosives aboard the vehicle.

Employees' claim 'unfounded,' says NBN-4 exec

By Marlon Ramos

CLAIMING THE GOVERNMENT-owned television network had not been remiss in its obligations to its workers, the general manager and chief executive officer of National Broadcasting Network-4 (NBN-4) yesterday said the accusations leveled against them by the network's employees were unfounded.

Jose Infante denied the allegations of the People's Television Employees Association (PTEA) that he and the NBN-4 management arbitrarily withheld the payment of the workers' benefits and salaries.

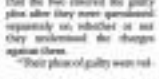
Infante was reacting to letters sent by PTEA president Renato Banda to President Macapagal-Arroyo and the National Union of Associations of the Philippines which listed their complaints against him and to Bids Secretary Joseph Ejercito Estrada.

Banda, who, like Arroyo, was appointed by Malacañang, said that apart from such allowances and bonuses, they handed out an additional incentive of P15,000 to NBN-4 employees last February.

He said the money came from revenues generated by the network in coverage of the Southeast Asian Games in Thailand last year.

He said that from 2000 to 2006, the station ran network gave an additional P12,000 pay raise to its employees.

Make policemen use the 'batuta'



WITH SO MANY POLICEMEN being slain used by Pres People's army guerrillas, policemen in remote areas should no longer be allowed to carry guns.

Instead, they should be made to tote batons or nightsticks which have no use for the NPAs.

Police stations in remote towns are the source of guns of the NPAs.

Policemen in remote towns or municipalities run away or don't put up a fight when rebels raid their places.

The few cops who fight the marauding guerrillas get killed easily as they are surprised and outnumbered.

One reason why NPAs raid a town is to collect pistols and M-16 rifles from individual policemen and from the station armory.

The NPA now has more guns and ammunition than there are members, thanks to the looting, he said.

* * *

Making policemen use nightsticks will force them to learn the rudiments of arnis or Filipino stickfighting in handling troublemakers.

Most cops always use their guns even on unarmed criminals or troublemakers.

By the way, why have our cops discarded the nightstick when policemen in other countries still carry it together with a pistol?

* * *

When NPAs raided the provincial jail in Sibul, Surigao Oriental recently, they took the guns in the jail armory, as well as the guns of the guards.

As they were leaving, some detainees shouted, "Ubos na s'ya (We want to join you)."

The raiders reply: "Ah, dito lang muna kayo dahil mas maraming kriminal sa labas (You stay here since you have crimes you should pay in society)."

The NPAs are better than some people in the Arroyo administration who condone corruption, a crime against the people.

* * *

There's an easy way for a corrupt or incompetent judge to get promoted to the Court of Appeals: Decide on a case that would please certain appointing powers in government.

At the appellate court, the newcomer feels very much at home as many justices are incompetent or corrupt themselves.

* * *

Who recommended former Malolos Judge Leonardo Leonida to the Commission on Elections as replacement of the late Commissioner Romeo Brawner?

Leonida allegedly had an unsavory reputation as a judge.

In fact, he was reprimanded by the Supreme Court for alleged irregular judicial conduct because he reportedly entertained litigants inside his chambers. Leonida denied any wrongdoing.

The judge and his relatives were probably just talking about the weather.

Doctor takes stand at Leviste trial

By G. Yap

RAFAEL DE LAS ALAS, "THE SLAIN MOM OF former Batangas Gov. Jose Antonio Leviste, could have been shot on the forehead at close range, a medical practitioner who smelled pieces of the victim's body was told at Leviste's murder trial yesterday.

"The muzzle of the assailant's firearm was in direct contact with the forehead of the victim," Dr. Erwin Erasmo told Judge Elma Alameda of the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 150 at the hearing.

Erasmo, who used to work as a medico-legal officer in the National Bureau of Investigation and is a consultant at the University of Santo Tomas Hospital, said he based his opinion on photos of the crime scene shown to him by the prosecution.

Leviste, who attended the hearing, said he was saddened that "the premeditation was in no manner based on the basis of a photograph," his lawyer, led by Henry Capela, had the same assertion, and did not bother to cross-examine the witness.

Upon direct examination by Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco, Erasmo also said Leviste's previous statement that De las Alas was about to shoot him before Leviste fired first was inconsistent with the crime scene photos.

He said the photos showed De las Alas was holding his weapon "loosely" and even "appeared directed toward his own body."

MetroBriefs

Mayor's offer has no basis, says landfill owner

THE PRIVATE owner of the landfill in Rodriguez (rizal, Pilad province has questioned the town mayor's offer to let the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) use the facility, as the proposed site is situated, Andy Santiago, spokesperson for International Waste Inc., the owner of the Montalban Solid Waste Disposal Facility (MSWDF), said that Rodriguez Mayor Pedro Cuenco's offer has no basis. "[The offer] has no legal ground since that facility that we own has long been closed down because the National Solid Waste Management Commission and other government environmental agencies have determined that its usefulness is over," he said. Cuenco, he added, is not even a position to make the offer because the facility he's offering is not even owned by the local government. In a press conference last week, the mayor offered a 40 percent discount to the MMDA as an incentive for dumping trash from Metro Manila into the 14-hectare facility. Citing contractual obligations to the Montalban Methane Power Corp., the mayor said the town needs the waste to fuel a P1.6 billion methane capture power generation plant.

Jeverly C. Ramostad

MMDA: Vehicular volume on EDSA down by 3%

THE PERCEIVED reduction of vehicles on Metro Manila streets as a result of rising fuel prices may not be as significant as is commonly believed, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority said yesterday. Initial findings of an MMDA survey showed a negligible three percent decrease in vehicles on Edsa in the first week of July as compared to the same period last year. MMDA General Manager Robert Nazareno said: 0-5 supervisors generally better results, according to the survey, with a more than five percent decrease so far, the official added. Nazareno said the MMDA's traffic engineering center in our survey conducting a survey on the vehicle volume count on Edsa, C-5 road and other major roads in the metropolis. Comparisons shall then be made with last year's count before the month of January when diesel and gasoline prices started to increase, he said in a statement. "The survey will definitely give us a more accurate count on the number of vehicles on the road after the series of gas price hikes since last January based on gathering the average count on some samples," he said.

GY Yap

School proxy's appointment deferred

THE BOARD of Regents of the City of Malabon University has deferred the appointment of former Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila president Benjamin Tayabas as head of the school. Bo Morrow, acting chairman of the city's Board of Regents, said Tayabas' appointment over allegations of corruption when he was PLM president. "The SOH standard is after Tayabas' appointment and clears to hold an open forum with students on July 23 to give him a chance to answer allegations of corruption against him," said Leni Salapare, a member of the board. On Tuesday, the board, chaired by City Councilor Len Oreta assigned Ramon Mamolla as the school's officer in charge and acting president. Mamolla is also a member of the CMU BOR. The university's president, Asuncion Jan, is scheduled to retire on July 15.

Nancy C. Carvajal

Iraq insists on timetable for US withdrawal

BAGHDAD—IRAQ WILL NOT accept any security agreement with the United States unless it includes dates for the withdrawal of foreign forces, the government's national security adviser said on Saturday.

But the government's spokesperson said any timetable would depend on security conditions on the ground.

Their differences underscore the debate in Baghdad over a deal with Washington that will provide a legal basis for US troops to remain when a UN mandate expires at the end of the year.

But Washington played down calls from Baghdad for a firm withdrawal deadline, saying both sought greater Iraqi security.

US Defense Secretary Robert Gates said on Tuesday he expected to pull more US troops from Iraq and reviewed any decision to withdraw would be based on the ability of Iraqi troops to take responsibility for security and combat.

On Monday, Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki suggested for the first time that a timetable be set for the departure of US forces under the dual being negotiated, which he called a commencement of understanding.

National Security Adviser Mowaffaq al-Rubaie appeared to go further on Tuesday.

"We can't have a memorandum of understanding with foreign forces unless it has dates and clear horizons determining the departure of foreign forces. We're unambiguously talking about their departure," he told reporters in Najaf after meeting Iraq's top Shiite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani.

He said he had spoken to Sistani about the US talks, but did not say if the cleric had an opinion on the negotiations.

The reverend cleric is constantly briefed on key national issues.

"I informed the (clerical) leadership about some of the advances in the talks ... There is a big difference in outlook between us and the Americans," Rubaie said, adding Iraq's 300,000-strong security forces had greatly improved.

Government spokesperson Ali al-Dabbagh, speaking on al-Hurra television, said it was an Iraqi demand to know when foreign forces would leave.

"Will this be through a timetable, a timeframe or time horizon? It depends on the situation on the ground. I think this will determine the dates or will affect whether it is possible to put (the departure) under a timetable," a senior Shiite official added. "It is very soon to talk about details. The talks are in the early stages."

The Bush administration has always opposed setting any withdrawal timetable, saying to do so would allow militant groups to lie low and wait until US troops in Iraq left. Reuters

Fans across Asia queue for iPhone launching

TOKYO/WELLINGTON—SEEking to be one of the world's first to grab the new-generation iPhone, devoted Apple fans around Asia are queuing up two days before its launch, undeterred by rain or freezing temperatures.

The July 11 launch will be the first chance for Asian consumers to own an iPhone, and related websites have been swamped with inquiries and early orders.

In Japan, one of the world's most advanced mobile markets, about 20 people were lined up outside Softbank Corp's flagship mobile store in Tokyo on Wednesday morning, with a sign at the head of the queue reading "We Love iPhone."

"The big appeal (of the iPhone) is that this is an Apple product," said Hiroyuki Sano, a 24-year-old graduate student who early on Tuesday arrived in rainy Tokyo from Nagoya, 360 km west of the capital, to be first in line.

He will rent 10 on Thursday while waiting to get his hands on the high-end version of the iPhone with 16 gigabytes of memory.

Apple calls it a "magical and revolutionary mobile device with an 8 gigabyte memory."

"I've told my professor I was going to get buy an iPhone, and he gave me permission," said Sano, wearing a T-shirt with an Apple logo. "He is an Apple-lover too, and he sent me off cheerfully." The long anticipated 3G iPhone, which has Safari Web links than its predecessor and supports third-party applications such as games and e-mail, will debut in Japan, Hong Kong, Australia, and New Zealand on Friday as part of the global launch in 22 countries.

The original iPhone was only available in the United States and Europe, and the next generation model is expected to go on sale in 70 countries by the end of the year.

Shares of Apple gained 2.3 percent on Tuesday ahead of the launch. Softbank shares rose 1.9 percent on Wednesday.

Softbank, Japan's third-biggest mobile carrier, will start selling iPhones at its flagship store at 7 a.m. on Friday and expand sales nationwide at noon.

Targeting a far bigger market with its new iPhone, Apple slashed the handset price and is allowing carriers to subsidize the phone this time around, making it easier for users to bring home the device.

Research firm Ipsos-Insight said 6.7 percent of 1,200 people it surveyed in Japan wanted to buy an iPhone immediately.

Four New Zealanders with duck chairs, sleeping bags and a small tent started queuing on a chilly Tuesday night outside the Auckland shop of Vodafone which will launch the iPhone at 12:01 a.m. Friday the first in the world.

"I'm really just doing it to be able to say that I'm the first one in the world with one of these phones," 23-year-old student Jenny Gladwell told the New Zealand Herald. Reuters

KIRITSUBO Sana (right), Tomishiro Daisuke (left) sit in the front row of the queue at a Softbank mobile store in Tokyo on July 9, two days ahead of the official launch of Apple's iPhone. —

G-8 leaders reject Mugabe's election, vow sanctions

TOYAKO, JAPAN—THE GROUP of Eight nations branded Robert Mugabe's election in Zimbabwe as illegitimate, promising to take measures against those responsible for the violence that prompted the opposition candidate to pull out of the race.

A statement from the G-8 leaders meeting in Japan on Tuesday expressed "grave concern" about Zimbabwe and called for officials in that country to work for a prompt, peaceful resolution of the political crisis.

"We do not accept the legitimacy of any government that does not reflect the will of the Zimbabwean people," the statement said.

"We deplore the fact that the Zimbabwean authorities proceed ahead with the presidential election despite the absence of opposition conditions for free and fair voting as a result of their systematic violence, intimidation and intimidation," it said.

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown called it "the strongest possible statement."

"It shows the unanimity of the whole international community, reflecting the outrage which people feel about the violence, the intimidation and the illegitimate founding of power by the illegal government," Brown said.

"The whole international community is now not prepared to accept an illegitimate government," he said.

The G-8 leaders agreed on Tuesday to send a United Nations envoy to help resolve the crisis. But there was no mention of UN sanctions, as the US has urged.

Moreover, in the UN's New York headquarters, Western supporters claimed enough support Tuesday for the UN Security Council to impose sanctions on Mugabe's government.

Mugabe's followers are accused of leading a campaign of murder and maiming against supporters of opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai, prompting him to drop out of a runoff election last month. Tsvangirai had won a March 29 presidential vote, but not by enough of a margin to avoid a runoff later.

After Tsvangirai dropped out of the runoff, Mugabe—who has ruled Zimbabwe for 28 years—declared victory in the one-candidate vote and was sworn into a sixth term in office. AP

Thai foreign minister faces impeachment

BANGKOK—THAILAND'S OPPOSITION Democrat Party said on Wednesday it would file an impeachment motion this week against Foreign Minister Noppadon Pattama for signing a deal with Cambodia on a disputed temple.

Party spokesperson Ong-art Klampaiboon told AFP that the impeachment motion would be filed as early as Thursday.

"We have more than one-fourth of MPs supporting the motion, thus we may file the motion on Thursday," Ong-art said.

The party was also considering whether to seek the entire cabinet's impeachment, after the government lost a major court battle over the temple on Tuesday, he added.

A simple majority of the combined chamber's would be enough to remove Noppadon from office.

The Constitutional Court ruled Tuesday that the cabinet violated the constitution by approving the deal with Cambodia without seeking parliamentary approval.

That verdict will provide the basis of the impeachment motion, but it was one hour when the minister would actually come up for debate in parliament.

The agreement signed by Noppadon had given Thailand's support in Cambodia in its bid to put the 11th century Preah Vihear temple on the World Heritage list. AFP

THAI Foreign Minister Noppadon Pattama —

WORLD BRIEFS

Cows for calm

ERIK CROSSING, GAZA STRIP—An Israeli-Hamas truce has boiled down to a simple trade off: For a day of calm, Israel adds five truckloads of cows and 200 tons of cement to its shipment of the Israel basics to Gaza, but also promises sporadic violent fire by rewarding the territory for a day. AP

Missile defense pact

PRAGUE—The United States and the Czech Republic signed an initial agreement to begin basing part of a US missile shield in the former Soviet territory. AP

Courting Hispanics

WASHINGTON—Republican John McCain and Democrat Barack Obama cover Hispanics—America's fastest growing electorate—go pleading to right the troubled US economy and narrate new immigrants' hopes of sharing in the dream of a better life through hard work. AP

Detention upheld

PHNOM PENH—A former female minister of the Khmer Rouge regime lost her appeal against detention by Cambodia's genocide tribunal where she is being held on charges of crimes against humanity. AP

Ecuador TV dispute

QUITO—Ecuador's government seized three television stations and 106 businesses on Tuesday to collect debts stemming from a bank failure in the 1990s. The economy minister resigns just hours before the takeover. AP

Referendum on minarets

BERN, SWITZERLAND—The Czechland will hold a nationwide referendum on whether to ban the construction of minarets where Muslims traditionally mount the call to prayer. AP

More US goods for Iran

WASHINGTON—US exports to Iran—including businesses, food grocers, cosmetics and possibly even weapons—grew more than reported during President George W. Bush's years in office even as he accused Iran of nuclear ambitions and helping terrorists. America's semi-more cigarettes to Iran, at least $150 million worth under Bush, than any other products. AP

French First Lady sings

PARIS—She charmed the queen of England, captivated Israel, impressed President Bush and won over the hardest sell of all—the French. But can French First Lady Carla Bruni keep spinning the magic once her new album comes out July 11? Its success, or failure, could be an affair of state. AP

Asian Spirit
ALL-IN Domestic Fares
Inclusive of fares, fuel and insurance surcharges, aviation security fee & 12% VAT. Non-refundable.

P989 Manila to Busuanga, Calbayog
P1489 Manila to Baguio, Masbate
P1889 Manila to Boracay (Caticlan)
Antique, Catarman
Cebu to Boracay
P2789 Manila to Basco (Batanes)

Sale period: July 10 - July 20, 2008
Travel period: July 10 - Oct. 15, 2008

Online bookings accepted!
www.asianspirit.com
Call (02) 855-3333 or visit your favorite travel agent now.

The WORLD

Edna Lorraine B. Bueno

Richest countries pledge action on food, oil prices

TOYAKO—LEADERS OF THE world's eight richest top industrial powers vowed on Wednesday to act to bring down soaring oil and food prices but failed to bridge deep differences with poor nations on how to fight climate change.

The Group of Eight wrapped up three days of talks in a secluded mountain resort in Japan by inviting leaders of growing emerging economies such as China and India for a special session round on global warming.

US President George W. Bush hailed the summit as "very productive" as he left the scenic venue. "I'm pleased to report that we've had significant success," he said.

The leaders of the G-8 nations, which together account for two-thirds of the world's gross domestic product, said in a joint statement that while global growth had "moderated," they were positive on the future.

They called for efforts to bring down oil prices, which have jumped five-fold since 2003, as well as the soaring cost of food which has set off riots in parts of the developing world.

"There's a need to improve transparency on the oil market," Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda told a news conference at the end of the summit with leaders of Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia and the United States.

G-8 leaders also called on all countries to end export restrictions on food, Fukuda said.

The summit was dominated by discussion on global warming amid growing concern that rising temperatures caused by carbon emissions are threatening entire species of plants and animals.

The rich nations' club on Tuesday agreed on the need for a global emissions cut of at least 50 percent by 2050, a step praised by G-8 leaders as a step forward after years of hesitation by Bush.

But developing countries slammed the statement as too weak, insisting with rich nations at a special expanded summit on Wednesday bringing together the G-8 with eight other leaders including Chinese President Hu Jintao and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

The deadlock between rich and developing nations has held up talks on reaching a new climate treaty by the end of 2009 in Copenhagen—a goal set in December at a UN-backed conference in Bali.

"Climate change is one of the great global challenges of our time," the 16 leaders said in a statement. "Our nations will continue to work constructively together to promote the success of the Copenhagen climate change conference." AFP

ACTIVISTS dressed up as the leaders of the G-8 countries pose at an anti-G-8 event in Sapporo on July 9. AFP

Unesco adds 27 new sites to heritage list

QUEBEC CITY...(UNESCO) WORLD HERITAGE Committee added a whopping 27 new sites on its World Heritage List on its 32nd session this week, including French Caribbean sites, a Hindu temple and a heavenly biosphere.

Nineteen cultural sites and eight natural sites were inscribed, said the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization panel, meeting in this edition of Canadian cities.

The total number of World Heritage sites now reaches 878 sites in 145 countries, it said.

In this lesser-hour, four countries—Papua New Guinea, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, and Vanuatu—entered the list for the first time.

The ancient Diocesan town of Rosso in central Albania was added to a listing for Quedlinburg, inscribed in 2005, illustrating the "coexistence of various religious and cultural communities," the committee said in a statement.

It features a 13th century castle, many Byzantine churches and mosques built under Turkish occupation, as well as houses used by various religious communities...notably some used by Sufi brotherhoods in the 18th century.

The heritage committee also approved the extension of the Mountain Railways of India with the inscription of the Kalka-Shimla Railway, a 96-kilometer long, single track working rail link built in the mid-19th century to provide a service to the highland town of Shimla. AFP

Iran test-fires nine missiles

TEHRAN...IRAN TEST-FIRED NINE LONG- and medium-range missiles on Wednesday, state media said, including one which it has said could reach Israel and US bases in the region.

The tests occurred at a time of increased tension between Iran and Israel over Tehran's nuclear program, which the West fears is aimed at developing bombs. Iran, the world's fourth-largest oil exporter, says its program is only for electricity.

A New York Times report in June said Israel had practiced an attack on Iranian nuclear sites, and the tension has settled financial markets. Oil and London Brent crude fell for seven days by more than a dollar on news of Iran firing the missiles.

"The aim of holding this maneuver is to show [Iran's] will and authority to the enemies that have threatened Iran with harsh language in recent weeks," state broadcaster IRIB quoted a Revolutionary Guards commander as saying.

"We ... launch three missiles in honor of Iran, to show that this is only a small part of Iran's capability and defensive power," said the commander, Hossein Salami.

Israel, believed to be the Middle East's only nuclear-armed power, has vowed to prevent Iran from acquiring an atomic bomb.

The United States says it wants to resolve the dispute by diplomacy but has not ruled out military action.

"Israel does not threaten Iran, but the Iranian nuclear program combined with their aggressive ballistic missile program is a matter of grave concern," Reuters

Imagine how great she can be.

Perhaps the next Picasso? Or another Newton. She can have a future far better than you've ever imagined with Insular Life i-Excel. i-Excel supplements college tuition fees, provides funds for books, practicum and project expenses. It rewards deserving students with additional cash incentives and ensures your child still gets an education even when you are no longer around. Start her future right. Grandmaya is within reach with Insular Life i-Excel.

i-Excel

INSULAR LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY, LTD.

PHILIPPINE Christian U's Jameson Vidal runs into the defense of San Beda rookie Elvin John Pascual.

SPORTS
Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Ochoa

28 days to the 29th Summer Olympics

Beijing 2008

15 freeloaders in 3 Bacolod teams

By Jane Manaoru

TWO UMPIRES, 4 PRINCIPALS with and several others who were listed as coaches joined the three Bacolod teams competing in the Asia-Pacific girls softball championship in Guangzhou, China.

All told, 15 people who were tagged as coaches joined the 107-delegation to the weeklong meet, which serves as the qualifying tournament for the world softball series in various divisions in the United States next month.

The three Bacolod teams competing in the junior league (11-12 years old), junior league (13-14) and senior league (14-16) were from Dominga Lanson National High School. The fourth squad playing in the big league (16-18) is made up of Adamson University players under the Team Manila banner.

The Philippine Sports Commission paid P1 million for the travel expenses of the four teams, with each one getting P200,000.

The PSC also temporarily shouldered the P50,000 (P600,000) registration fee the Bacolod teams failed to raise in order to compete and avoid being sent home.

A document obtained by the Inquirer showed that Dominga Lanson National High School principal Ibrahim Albasen, wife Dely and sister Ana Bete were part of the 60-man Bacolod delegation.

A certain Alfelita Arsit and Mario Estrella Jr. were included in the lineup as coaches.

Also sneaking free trips to China were Dionisio Sancon and Haydee Sinapiro, who were designated as umpires in the official roster. Based on the PSC guidelines, umpires are not supposed to be included in the official delegation since they are officials who are paid by organizers during the tournament.

School principals Ms. Elena Dionisio and Nelly Catalan of Bacolod City's Education and Training Center School were also in the list.

A PSC staff said Teresita Sinapiromo, the Bacolod delegation's senior coach, had admitted that Arsit and Estrella were not real coaches and have no business joining the team. The nurse PSC source added that officials and the relatives had overloaded their sixfigure expenses.

Meanwhile, an ineligible field duo was prevented Team Manila and Bacolod's junior league squad from shooting their respective best-of-five series against Guam teams yesterday in Guangzhou. The Manilans and the Bacolod girls led the series, 2-0.

Despite delays caused by the bad weather, the Bacolod Senior Leaguers managed to rout neighborhood rival Indonesia, 20-0, in six abbreviated five-inning contests.

SHARK
CAR ACCESSORIES
414-6647
372-3640
372-2464
www.sharkphil.com

Lions survive PCU 5

By Cedelf P. Tupas

REALITY CAME DOWN HARD AND FAST on Franklin Lina—and the results, according to fairer, left him stunned.

The Red Lions starter had a ready answer as to why the two-time defending champion played so good in a scintillating, 29-point win on opening day round for 1-0 days then struggled before pulling through against the only rubber team in the NCAA men's basketball tournament.

"I've been in denial of the team not being ready but it really showed," Lina said after the Red Lions rallied for a 72-63 victory over the Philippine Christian University Dolphins at the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay City.

Mitch guard Borgie Hermida and Ringo Comadinha secured the most points and hit the biggest shots as the Lions rooted back from 34-36 in the last 4:35 to gain a piece of the tournament lead with idle Letran at 2-1.

"We started out flat because of the 10-day break," Lina said. "I'll take the win. But these games are the kind that make you wonded."

Cardinals strike

In the first game, Magnus notched Perpetual Help bests beyond the arc in the last 1:20 to escape with a 70-65 win.

It was the Cardinals' third straight victory after their June 20 defeat to the Lions at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Altas fell into a tie with the San Sebastian Stags and the Jose Rizal Heavy Bombers with 1-2 records.

Kelvin Ordoñez scored 16 points, including a triple-that gave Magnus a 70-65 lead, before RJ Guillermo knotted in a couple of trips to take the final 90 seconds to seal the win.

The Lions and Dolphins battled in five lead changes and three deadlocks in the opening five minutes of the fourth period, before Hermida knocked in eight of his 15 points to give San Beda control of the match.

The Lions were shaky at the start, fielding all but two of their first 13 shots and allowing the Dolphins to move a 14-4 advantage behind Lei Mar Navarro's three triples.

Unnoticed were the four junior game in the empresas of Magnus, 100-51.

ACE
The helpful place.
Clearance Sale
July 11 - 20
ACE BUILDERS CENTER
NEXT SM MALL/NOVAVILLE
Life is an ongoing project. ACE

Nat'l Youth squad pulls out of Stankovic Cup

By Jeannine N. Faye

THE NORA PHILIPPINE SOUTH team abandoned its plan to compete in the Southeast Asian Basketball Association (Seaba) Stankovic Cup due to "conflict with the academic schedules of many of the team's players."

Slated from July 23 to 28 at Ubon Ratchathani in Thailand, the tournament had been initially set as a runup before the 18 under squad sent action in the Fiba Asia youth championship in Tehran, Iran, from Aug. 28 to Sept. 3.

"Missing school more contrary to the mission, vision and core values we have set for this program," team manager Jun Ilo said in a statement yesterday. "Our desire to monitor our youth demands excellence in their academic endeavors."

The statement said the players will already miss 14 days of classes in the Iran tour and participation in the Stankovic Cup means another week of school absence.

However, plans have been drawn up for team to compete in the ongoing Liga Filipinas as the young nationals succeed by Franz Pumaren prepare to go up against powerhouse youth Asian teams.

Led by 6'8 Canadian Norbert Torres, the Philippines earned the right to represent the region in the Fiba Asia youth meet after capturing the crown in the Seaba Championship for home fans in Bukit Jalil last May.

Other members are Gabriel Banal, Mark Joel de Guzman, Jaypee Ebondo, Ian Sangalang, Hyun Bonot Garcia, Joseph Yeo Simon and team captain Frank Golla.

Eagles, Warriors eye No. 2

LANEX TODAY (Philsports Arena)
7 p.m.—Blue Eagles
vs. [illegible]
Up 1-0—Arenas vs. Villanueva

By Jeannine N. Faye

IN NEARLY EVERY WAY, THE ATENEO BLUE Eagles seem like a tougher contender than the Adamson Falcons in the 71st UAAP men's basketball tournament.

Yet coach Norman Black sees the opposite even after Ateneo's ego-bursting triumph over chief rival La Salle in the opening weekend.

"Adamson is a very big team, a very established team," said Black of the Eagles' 4 p.m. game against the Falcons at 4 p.m. today at the Philsports Arena.

"They're well-coached. We have to them over the summer, so we're expecting a very tough game."

University of the East, last year's runner-up, will also vie for a share of the early lead against National at 2 p.m.

"We wanted to get off to a good start," said Black of the Eagles, who subdued the defending champions last May, 79-75, on Saturday.

"The earlier you get that first victory, the better off you're going to be as far as confidence is concerned. The sad thing, though, is we're happy [Sunday] but we have to worry about Adamson because it played very well against FEU."

Behind Michael Gallman's 22-point performance, the Falcons put up a tough fight before bowing to the Tamaraws via a late 79-75 decision last Saturday.

"We have no go-to guy, but everybody is working very hard as a team," said Falcons coach Leo Austria. "I want them to understand the system we should run, and I think we're getting there. We're also developing some individual skills so it's just a matter of time before we'll be fluid."

The Eagles will again rest to fifth-year guard Elmer Tiu, who drew support from Eric Salvanera and Rabeh Al-Hussaini in the end game against the Archers.

Elmer Espiritu stepped up for the Maroons by unloading seven straight points in a crucial stretch for a 78-73 victory over the Blue Dragons. Figure and is expected to lead UE anew.

LA SALLE rookie Mael Villanueva charges into Ateneo freshman Ryan Buenafe during their game last July 5. The Eagles won, 79-72, in a team effort being talked about because of a technical flopped on La Salle's coaching staffer not wearing their IDs. [illegible]

UST coach admits fault in ID issue

By Mocong R. Casello

ADMITTING HIS FAULT, SANTO TOMAS coach Pido Jarencio yesterday said that he is willing to accept sanctions for not wearing his UAAP issued ID as shown by a photo released by La Salle officials which came out in the newspapers Tuesday.

"We admit neglect of that certain rule and will abide to whatever sanction the commissioner (Chito Narvasa) would impose," the former PBA gunned said the license.

Jarencio added that if it would put the team in jeopardy, Santo Tomas would gladly yield two technical free throws before the start of the Tigers' game against the UP Fighting Maroons on Saturday at the Ultra in Pasig.

"It would be like serving your suspension for incurring a flagrant foul in your previous game," Jarencio explained.

The 47-year-old former King Gobble in the 1980s gave his side advice seeing the photo showing that he was not wearing the UAAP ID required of all team personnel during games.

The photo was sent by a La Salle supporter and forwarded by team officials to media outlets on Monday. The university has declined sending the photo to newspapers.

"We don't want the public to feel that we (UST) are being favored by the commissioner, because we are not," Jarencio, who gave the Tigers the championship in his rookie year in 2006, said. "We were just worried during the opening and forgot all about it (wearing the ID)."

"We provide discipline at UST and we believe that we had done should go unpunished."

La Salle: We were unjustly penalized

By Jeannine N. Faye

THE MUCH-DISPUTED TECHNICAL FOUL during the Ateneo-La Salle game "unjustly penalized" the Green Archers, thus prompting the defending champion to race to the UAAP board to "rectify the wrong that was perpetrated."

La Salle coach Franz Pumaren came in a letter and a game video sent to UAAP president Dr. Bienvenido Luciano yesterday. The board had yet to receive the correspondence at press time.

La Salle, however, maintained so far vague as to what rectification it is seeking.

"We'll leave it to the board to decide," said La Salle's Bro. Bienie Oca. "We're just stating that these are the facts."

Game officials, headed by commissioner Chito Narvasa, slapped a technical foul on the Archers even before the opening tip-off as their coaching staff's failure to wear their official IDs.

In the same letter, Oca brought to the UAAP board's attention that commissioner Chito Narvasa "denied" that the University of Santo Tomas violated the new mandatory rule that coaches must wear their IDs during the game. (See related story on this page.)

A photo published in the Inquirer last Monday showed coach Pido Jarencio not wearing an ID when the Tigers bowed to UE, 76-75.

La Salle reiterated that it "respects the game's outcome" and demanded that Narvasa "be more consistent in the implementation of the league's rules."

HARVEDA

Gomez keeps lead; Paragua now 4th

By Ray Luarca

GRANDMASTER MARC PARAGUA streaked to his fifth straight victory and finally sneaked into the top five of the National Chess Federation of the Philippines qualifying tournament in Muntinlupa City.

Paragua, winner of the recent Marshall Open in New York, vaulted to 4.5 points after 11 rounds of play and garnered an unanswered IM John Paul Gomez and GM Wesley So in the event being held to determine members of the national teams to the World Mind Games and Chess Olympiad.

Continuing his recovery from a lackluster start, Paragua trounced National Master Joey Hidlao in 47 moves of an Irregular Opening and IM Edmundo Galan in 47 moves of the Pirc to catch up with fellow GMs Jayson Gonzales and Darwin Lapis, International Master Chito Garma and NM Leonardo Carlos.

They trailed GM Rustam Kuzubov, "Borg" Villanueva, who matched the win-then-draw effort of Gomez and drove the last two rounds to move 7.0 points.

Gomez, a two-time Palawenos Pinoy basis champion, downed IM Ronald Bancod in the 10th round and then drew with IM Chito Garma in the 11th round to tally 10 points, two up on the top-seeded So.

The 14-year-old So, currently the world's youngest GM, drew with GM Amy Hadash in 20 moves of the English opening before beating IM Richard Bitoon in 28 moves of the Sicilian Scheveningen.

Villanueva, the Palawan Open champion, split the points with GM Jayson Gonzales in 28 moves of the Sicilian Irregular and won over Bancod in 64 moves of the Slav.

Gonzales bested IM Rudy Pinduca in 51 moves of the Semi-Slav in the 11th round.

Filipinos dominate Macau karting event

THE PHILIPPINES DOMINATED the kickoff of the 2008 Asian Karting Open Championship Series with two wins at the Nam-kwan De Guimaraes Circuit in Macau, China.

RGR Racers John Tuvalla and Joey Dichaia, and Jet Racing's Dubsian Gadili and Franco Reyes bagged convincing wins in their respective divisions of the event.

The 14-year-old Tuvalla powered the biggest triumph for the country when he sailed to the ROK Juniors class title 12-year-old Dichaia pulled an impressive performance to capture the ROK Junior crown.

Gadili and Reyes, on the other hand, swept both the Pre-Final and the Final races to rule the Cadet titles and the Yamaha Junior Cup respectively.

The RP squad was backed by Pagcor Sports and the Department of Tourism.

Dagondon bests male drivers

ROSARIO, BATANGAS—TOP FEMALE driver Whea Wilma Dagondon of Manukan raked a male-dominated Pro Class field in the seventh leg of the 2008 Sun Mig Coffee Drag Racing Championship at the Batangas Racing Circuit Drag Strip recently.

Shaking the limelight with Dagondon was also defending champion Arnaldo Tia of Team Rev, who topped the Quick 8 division to virtually capture the overall crown.

Dagondon clinched her second win with a time of 12.370 seconds. Sheldon Chua, who suffered engine problems, was runner-up with 29.267 seconds.

Anthony Go of Team Rev wound up third but held on to the solo lead.

"I'm very happy with the win," said Dagondon. "Everything went smooth for us and I just hope this victory will evoke more women drivers into racing."

Tia zoomed to the finish line with a time of 18.013 seconds to beat Ed Christian Go of Shpeder Racing.

WHEN Whea Dagondon conquers a field of men.

Guiao a cinch as RP coach?

IN HUDDLE

Beth Gelo

WHEN MIKE Guiao was recently mentioned as one of the coaches being considered for the men's national team that would be tabbed from the PBA, nobody objected.

In fact everyone agreed it was high time he was given a chance to try his hand on the international level.

Yeng Guiao, you see, has never coached a Philippine team. He was during the time when he was with the PBL. The closest he got as handling a national team was as assistant coach in Dirk Sumners in the 1989 Southeast Asian Games in Malaysia.

* * *

The other day I called Yeng to congratulate him on how he has managed to keep the Batang Pier not only afloat but soaring high despite the loss of his key players the last two seasons.

The coaches started in 2000 when Boyet Villanueva was dealt to San Miguel Beer. After that it was Liberty Eagale, followed by Gary Pascual and, most recently, Asi[illegible] Fabio[illegible].

I remember talking with Yeng after the PBA rookie draft at Market Market in Taguig last year. With a depleted cast (and it wasn't an depleted then) Yeng said he couldn't be too optimistic about the fortunes of the Batang in the coming season.

"I hope the fans do not expect too much from us," he said.

Truth is, nobody expected much from Yeng and his team. It was hard to understand why the Batang continued to win, always landing in the upper bracket of the standings despite the odds being against them.

Even at the outset, the 6-foot-2 Cyrus Baguio has emerged as the Batang's go-to-guy is clear indication that Yeng is the kind of coach who brings out the best in his players.

"And he wasn't even recruited from the rookie draft," he reminded me.

For seven consecutive conferences, Batang Pier has managed to be in the semifinal round. They just can't seem to do anything wrong.

* * *

"Is there a secret to this? Are you following a magic formula?" I asked the Bal Bull mainer, who is also the vice governor of Pampanga.

Yeng wouldn't think of anything special the team is doing.

"As far as the technical aspect is concerned, simple long ang ginagawa namin, nothing super special. I believe the players are motivated. I don't give them too little or too much of anything. Like playing time for example, if the player doesn't have enough, he will not be able to develop confidence. Pag sobra naman, he will not value the time given him.

This conference, although he did not expect to, Yeng might find himself in contention for his sixth championship. He, He has five ranked under his belt since he joined the PBA, all of them in import-laced affairs.

And although Bal Bull did not win a single title in the last three conferences, this time he shone brightest because he was managed to overachieve despite the dirt-luck of imaginary.

* * *

While nothing formal has been offered or proposed to him as yet, Yeng said he will be honored to coach the national team.

"If ever though, I hope we wouldn't have to go through a screening process which we are asked to submit training plans and programs and all that stuff before we are chosen," he said.

Yeng's remarking. Of the PBA coaches who were considered for the national team that was formed for the 2007 Jakarta-Palembang the other two were Joel Banal and Chot Reyes, who was chosen largely on the basis of the impressive program he submitted.

Yeng didn't want to go through all that again, I guess.

Actually, the choice of a national coach might not be that simple. To start with, who will have the right to choose, the SBP or the company that will sponsor the national team?

Last time, it was Dr. Jose Miguel Lopez[illegible].

Interesting they will want to choose a coach from the stable.

One thing sure, the PBA has agreed to support the national team for the next two years. That means the pro league will be preparing for the 2009 Fiba-Asia Men's championship which is the qualifier for the World Basketball Championship for 2010.

"I'm available if they want me," Yeng said despite his misgivings.

Pacquiao cleared as RP flag bearer

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ITS GOVERNOR MANNY PACQUIAO marching with the world's best athletes as Philippine flag bearer during the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics on Aug. 8.

The Philippine Olympic Committee yesterday said it has already screened the nomination for new World Boxing Council lightweight champion as standard bearer of the 87-delegation.

PACQUIAO

At a late story, Pacquiao will have to get his visa from the Chinese Embassy on his own, and receive his pre-valid card once he arrives in Beijing.

But POC secretariat head Moying Mauricio said the boxing legend will have all the supporting papers from the POC.

"We will have somebody to assist him," he added.

President Macapagal-Arroyo had earlier installed Pacquiao as special Olympic envoy and flag bearer of the 15-man RP delegation several days after the Filipino became the first Asian to win four world boxing titles when he demolished Mexican-American David Diaz in Las Vegas.

Arroyo is also attending the Olympic opening ceremony with other heads of states like Americas president George W. Bush.

Swimmer Miguel Molina, the 2007 Southeast Asian Games most outstanding male athlete and named to carry the flag, willingly stepped aside in favor of Pacquiao, who was chosen to serve as inspiration in the country's quest for a first gold medal.

P&A MAGAZINE P&A Commissioner Benny Barrios (center) shakes hands with Pro-Ads Marketing Concepts president Henry Tan after signing a three-year contract for the publication of the P&A's three lifestyle magazine "Life Outside Basketball." Looking on is Town Publishing president Sol Cockpit). In background are P&A media chief Willy Marcial (partly visible) and P&A special administrative assistant Ricky Sarmiento.

ASIAN BOWLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Nationals snare trios

HONG KONG—VETERAN CHESTER KING exploded with a three-game series of 847 pins to power the Philippines to the men's team gold medal with 4193 in the 26th Asian Bowling Federation Men's and Women's Championships here Tuesday night.

King shot lines of 279, 289 and 279 for a sterling average of 278.67 pins per game and got a big support from Ronel Manuzon and Frederick Ong, who posted 713 and 647 three-game totals, respectively, as the Filipinos captured their first gold in the prestigious tournament.

King, who set an Asian championship record of 813 (3-game series) in the team-of-five event, leads the individual race.

KING

Another Filipino standout, singles bronze medalist Ronel Miranda, with King's 727 pins with 4750 (206.52) average), while reigning leader Mubarak Al-Mutaddi of Qatar slipped to third with 4711 (204.70).

The second block of the team event that will determine the all-events champion and the top 16 bowlers who will advance to the Masters competition was being played at presstime yesterday.

"It's a big day for our bowlers, particularly Chester (King) who worked hard to get back into his old form after a rough outing in the last Philippine Open," said PBC president Steve Hontiveros.

The Filipinos finished 25% pins ahead of Malaysia's Adrian Ang, Aaron Bong, Abdul Mat Aiman (5017) and 205 pins away from hemisphere Singapore (5098).

Another RP team composed of Tyrone Ongpauco and Tuason is running fifth in the team-of-five event with 2291.

Malaysia leads with 3427, followed by Qatar (3397).

On the distaff side, the RP team of Kristah Lyn Tabora, Lisa del Rosario and Marie Alexis Ng remained 12th with 3341, while the group of Dyan Constantino, Kimberly Lee and Elaine Ongpauco came in 15th with 3292.

SPORTS

A different race, a different Schumacher

German biker seizes Tour yellow jersey

CHOLET, FRANCE—STEFAN SCHUMACHER of Germany took the yellow jersey at the Tour de France, and now says everything else is a bonus.

He knows his early lead won't last.

"Everybody dreams of this jersey," Schumacher said on Tuesday. "It's incredible. The moment on the podium, you see it a thousand times on television, and to be there by yourself—you can't imagine."

Schumacher regained the first time and in the three-week race, but the big winner in the fourth stage may have been Australia's Cadel Evans. He gained more than a minute on his biggest challengers, a gap that will reserve for riders the slowest mountain stages series.

Schumacher finished the 29.5-kilometer individual trial in 35 minutes, 44 seconds. Rita Kiefeld of Luxembourg and David Millar of Britain finished second and third, both 16 seconds back. Thus is also the order of the overall standings, where Schumacher leads by 12 seconds.

He will probably hold the lead in Wednesday's long, flat stage, but he is under no illusions about keeping the jersey.

"I didn't come to win the Tour," he said. "My goal was to wear the jersey one day and to win a stage. I reached this goal, in every thing else is a bonus."

Yet Schumacher is riding the Tour as all remains contentious. Stopped by German police for drunken driving in October Schumacher's blood sample tested positive for amphetamines. He has consistently denied taking drugs.

He wasn't punished by cycling authorities because the use of the drug outside of competition is not considered to be an offense.

Belgian cyclist Tom Boonen also tested positive for a drug—cocaine—in an out-of-competition test. He was banned by Tour organizers, but Schumacher was allowed to ride.

Schumacher said he felt sorry for Boonen but does not see a parallel to the cases. He notes that he was not caught in a doping test.

"I was really not proud that I went into the car drunk," he said. "I am a public personality and I also have to be an example for other guys. It wasn't good for me, but I didn't take drugs."

Evans, last year's runner-up, is in fourth place. He has a lead of 1:04 over his biggest challengers, 17th-place Alejandro Valverde of Spain, and a further 16 seconds over Carlos Sastre.

Romain Bellis of France entered the day with the yellow jersey but finished nearly five minutes behind Schumacher.

"I gave a lot yesterday and I was very worn today," he said. AP

APPARENTLY all no relation to Michael Schumacher, Stefan Schumacher does have a kinship with his compatriot and namesake when it comes to speed. This Schumacher topped the time trial and—instead of the Ferrari red—will be wearing the Tour de France yellow.

Fil-Am UFC expert Vera fights July 20

By Jane Navarro

STILL REELING FROM A CONtroversial defeat, Brandon "The Truth" Vera will try to redeem himself when the Filipino American mixed martial arts fighter collides with Andy "Rapido" Ruiz in the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) Fight Night on this Pearl, Nevada on July 20.

The 30-year-old Vera lost to Brazilian Fabricio Werdum by a disputed referee stoppage in the UFC 85 Bedlam last month in London, England after the referee waved him out with only 20 seconds remaining in the first round of their three-round battle.

Fighting out of San Diego, California, Vera needs a win badly after absorbing his second straight defeat from Werdum to get back on track for a championship crack in the heavyweight division.

The curly-tresses talented Venezuelan-irrepressible MMA record of eight victories without a loss and a draw.

Though the climb to the top will be tough, Vera vowed not to stop until he captures the title owned by reigning champion Antonio Rodrigo Nogueira.

Ruiz is an All-American wrestler from the University of Wyoming who finished a degree in health science and exercise sports science.

Another fighter with Filipino blood in the international MMA stage is Mark "The Filipino Wrecking Machine" Munoz, who boasts of four wins without a loss in the World Extreme Cagefighting, a broader organization of the UFC.

Ikeda corners PNGA golf match play berth

CHIHIRO IKEDA BAGBEI AM allergy and used an explosive start to fire a one-under par 71 and finish third in the 28-hole stroke play phase in the PNGA (Pacific Northwest Golf Association) Phinney's Amateur Championship in Richland, Washington Tuesday.

Ikeda, getting up for next week's Junior World in San Diego, birdied the first four holes at the Meadows Springs Country Club but failed to sustain her charge, dropping two shots in the last three holes for a 31-36 (set).

Still, it was enough to secure the ICTSI-backed her from joint 13th to solo third and a spot in the match play phase of the event.

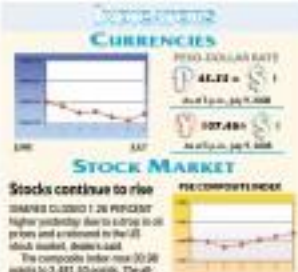
She wound up with a 147, four shots behind former winner Rachel Hsu of Washington, who matched par 72 to one less overall honors with a 143.

Hsu, playing with a swollen face, jumped past ICTSI teammate and RP Amateur Open winner Anya Tanpinco and Cyna Bolaños (joint fourth).

IN THIS ISSUE
- GMA TV launched in NZ, Australia /B3
- Gov't budget gap seen at P45B in '09 /B6

BUSINESS
Editor Raul G. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano

Gov't to spend P55B on farm sector



Eyes self-sufficiency in rice by 2013

By Michelle V. Rarus

THE GOVERNMENT IS PREPARED TO SPEND AS much as P55 billion over the next five years to fund programs that will help the country achieve rice self-sufficiency by 2013.

Augusto Santos, acting director general of the National Economic and Development Authority, said government coffers showed that P52 billion to P55 billion worth of investments in the farm sector would be required to attain the goal of rice sufficiency in five years.

"[The government] will work on raising funds to meet that amount, and if [internally generated funds would not be enough, then we will resort to borrowings," Santos said in a briefing at the ongoing rice and corn convention in Pasay City.

Santos said the amount would cover mainly projects related to irrigation and the establishment of more farm-to-market roads. An audio-visual presentation by the Neda also said the government would provide credit facilities for farmers and distribute fertilizers.

The Neda said the government would implement the so-called FIELDS (fertilizer, irrigation and infrastructure, Education and extension, Loans and insurance, Others and other producers facilities) program that incorporates all activities aimed at achieving the goal of 100-percent self-sufficiency for rice.

The country imports about 10 percent of its rice requirement and is now the world's biggest importer of the staple.

"This is because Filipinos are really heavy rice eaters. The 10 percent of demand that is imported already translates to about 1.5 million metric tons of rice every year," Santos said.

Prices of commercial rice have surged to historic highs, prompting more families to depend on subsidized rice sold by

SOV'T TO P2

Peso recovers to 45.55 to $1 on oil price dip

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO BOUNCED OFF 16-MONTH lows to close at 45.55 to a dollar yesterday as regional currency markets took heart from a dip in global oil prices and the US Federal Reserve's signal that it will keep a lid longer an emergency credit line for Wall Street firms in need of cash.

The local currency gained 31 centavos from Tuesday's finish of 45.867 against the greenback to draw near the day's high of 45.55. This developed as the market cheered the fall in oil prices to $137 a barrel as the US leaves earlier fears record highs above $145.

Still, the peso has shed 9.3 percent this year, wiping out nearly half of its 19-percent gain in 2005 when it became the region's best performing currency.

Some currency traders said the market also found an opportunity to look to profits ahead of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' monetary policy-setting next week, where another increase in interest rates is expected.

The BSP raised last month its benchmark interest rates by a quarter percentage point to help curb rising pressures from lofty fuel and food prices. It was the first increase in three years.

But despite the preemptive move, UBS analyst Edward Teather said long-term bond yields have continued to edge higher and the peso depreciated on a trade-weighted basis.

"The message is that investors believe that monetary policy remains too loose and that real interest rates are unattractive," Teather said.

PESO: B2

GOLF course at the Mimosa Leisure Estate

CDC awards Mimosa complex to Waterfront

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

WATERFRONT PHILIPPINES INC., THE listed firm of tycoon Tony Wilson Tantoco, said yesterday it was a bid to operate the 200-hectare Mimosa Leisure Estate, owned as Clark's tourism crown.

Levy Laus, president of Clark Development Corp. (CDC), the government entity that oversees the development of the former American air base, said WPI's bid of P1.5 billion cleared the government's floor price of P1.4 billion.

This was the third bidding conducted by the CDC for the resort complex.

WPI assistant corporate secretary Arsenio Alfiler Jr. said the company received yesterday a notice of award from CDC informing that the CDC board approval was dated July 4. The notice was for WPI's lease, development, operation and management of the Mimosa Leisure Estate.

The complete version of a 36-hole golf course and 125 Mexican luxury private villas

CDC AWARDS: A2

Air Philippines cuts routes as fuel costs bite

By Dante L. Lucas

DOMESTIC CARRIER AIR Philippines has suspended its commercial flight operations to three major Mindanao cities effective yesterday and reduced its frequency for its main Visayas-Mindanao service.

The airline, owned by tobacco and beer magnate Lucio Tan, suspended its services from Manila to the cities of Davao (daily), Zamboanga (daily) and Cagayan de Oro (twice daily).

Air Philippines also cut the number of its flights between Cebu and Davao from twice daily to once a day, retaining only its morning service.

It earlier reduced the frequency of its Manila-Puerto Princesa service, cutting its Tuesday-Thursday-Saturday service, leaving only two daily flights for the route.

Airline industry sources said the decision to cut the airline's route network was made as part of its move to cut costs amid the skyrocketing price of aviation fuel.

The airline has been hit particularly hard by high petroleum prices because its jet fleet consists of 30-year-old Boeing 737-200s, whose engines are substantially less fuel efficient than their modern counterparts.

Air Philippines president and CEO Capt. Edilberto Medina confirmed the suspension of the flights in an interview with

AIR PHILIPPINES: B3

Introducing BMW Navigation.
The first of its kind in the Philippine automotive industry is now a standard feature in all BMW 3 Series and 1 Series models.

Navigation that speaks to you
Nationwide map coverage
Bluetooth and mp3 technology

Megaworld to launch P12.5-B condo project

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

MEGAWORLD CORP. IS SET TO launch its SM's high-end residential condominium cluster in Fort Bonifacio Global City in Taguig dubbed "The Venice Luxury Residences," which is estimated to cost P12.5-billion.

In a disclosure, the company said the new project followed the soon-to-be-completed McKinley Hill Eastshore Villas Phase 1 and 2 and McKinley Hill Tuscany Private Estate, which has enjoyed brisk presale activities sales.

Other Megaworld residential condominium projects in McKinley Hill include the three towers of Stanford Executive Residences and Morgan Executive Suites.

"The Venice is inspired by the architecture, waterways and romantic ennui of the legendary Italian city of Venice. It will be built on a 2.1-hectare site within the 50-ha McKinley Hill, Megaworld's biggest new township project to date.

The condo's overall estimated sales value of P12.5 billion. Construction is targeted to start next year for the first of seven towers. The whole project may be completed in five to seven years.

According to Megaworld first vice president for marketing and project head Noli Hernandez, The Venice would have "resort garde amenities that bring back Old World sensibilities."

The first residential tower will be the Allessandro, to be followed by Bellini, Canova, Donatello, Florence and Giovanni. Megaworld reconciled the Italian architectural flair to the Filipino tendency of home to make sure that The Venice will remain true to its origins and inspirations.

Average unit prices for the 31-story The Venice are P3.6 million for a 46.5-square meter studio, P6 million for a 66.4-sq. m. one-bedroom, P8.5 million for a 101.6-sq. m. two-bedroom and P11 million for a three-bedroom at 113.5 sq. m.

The Venice's seven towers will be integrated with the McKinley Hill Town Center's American Mall, which features a Grand Canal where commuters and visitors can take a gondola ride and pass by the famous Rialto Bridge, the St. Mark's Tower, Clock Tower, shopping promenades and the Piazza Grande. The Venetian Mall is slated for opening late next year.

7-tower complex in Fort Boni

Cheating arrangement

ALL EYES IN BUSINESS ARE NOW on the foreign exchange rate.

Well, after almost four years of uninterrupted gain against the dollar, the peso lately has shown lesions — until "yesterday."

Okay—let us not be diplomatic about it. The peso actually got lost, en block and blue in the market. It gave up more than P3 to a dollar in only a couple of months.

In business, they know that the appreciation of the peso across-the-board the impact of unexpecting world oil prices to the guts down here in my hamangay.

It made the imported dollar-priced oil...and everything else made out of it—less expensive in terms of pesos.

But now the pace is losing steam. And from what I gathered, it is worrying the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

Some BSP know analysts were snooping around the banking system for clues on the market's psychology.

They have been asking "fancy" traders of banks, for instance, about what they think would be the exchange rate's next "resistance level," which is actually a banking jargon for "up to what point were the traders willing to place their bets that the peso would go really bad."

In banking, such queries from the BSP are rather best informal, can always take different meanings. It is open to interpretation. Well, also speculation.

Some would read the BSP reaction as a sign that the central bank was actually supporting a weaker peso. And so traders took positions accordingly. Which, in turn, contributes to the peso's weakness. And so and on.

Our confusion in banking do not deny speculators in the exchange rates nowadays, and the last month's guesses is further peso depreciation.

Now, while it may be welcome news for the dollar earners, I suggest that the rest of us simply bite our nails.

It is now a matter of foreboding for BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. (Only he has the means to monitor every currency deal in the entire banking system. He has a computer in his room, monitoring all the dollar trades. He can know instantly if some fool/moron is going on.

Tetangco is the type who will not tolerate it.

* * *

All EVERYBODY knows, except perhaps certain senators, the electricity rate watchdog, the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), last month ordered the municipality Napocor to reduce its electricity charges in Luzon and its Wholesale.

Actually, the order covered the billing period July to December 2008.

That was close to two years ago, right? Then it was in reality a "reimbursement." The state-owned and government-managed Napocor has been overbilling us all along.

Translation: Napocor has been cheating.

There a problem with the ERC order. It only covered a few months in 2008. What happened to the entire 2007, plus the entire 2008, and part of 2009 and 2010? Napocor was cheating us in those times too?

The ERC order, you see, has something to do with foreign exchange gain. Napocor all along was charging us electricity taxes as if the peso was at 46 during at 50 to a dollar, or something close.

Remember, the exchange rate went to as far as P47 to a dollar a couple of months ago. It gave Napocor billions upon billions of pesos in windfall profit. See though brilliant management, mind you. It was clever of us not to mention called poor speculation.

Here is the comment from ERC Chair Rodolfo Albano Jr. on the Napocor rate adjustment:

"The (Napocor) has been directed to expedite the filing of the application for the remaining period of January 2007 to March 2008 to further help moderate the plight of end-consumers who are already burdened with high prices of basic commodities.

Wow, an explanation as why the application was made partially instead of the full period must be adequately established.

Three you are: it simply means that Napocor is still cheating us.

* * *

BUT I GUESS something is wrong in this picture. We have the electricity rate regulator, the ERC itself, needing to ask the, well, "regulatee" Napocor to please apply for a rate reduction.

Do we take it, boss, that ERC cannot force Napocor to reduce its rates? Look, before ERC can give out any order of rate reduction, Napocor will have to ask for it. This is, in fact, the arrangement.

And why will any corporation ever want to give up its windfall profit?

Share us, since the public is dealing here with this government corporate monster...the very same business connected by the powerful Napocor mafia, together with their allies in the Palace and in Congress?

No one knows for sure much Napocor will have to reimburse its windfall profit from the peso to dollar exchange rate.

One consumer group is saying that Napocor should refund us some P19 billion in the so-called generation rate adjustment mechanism (GRAM) and the incremental currency rate adjustment (Icera).

The GRAM allows Napocor in recover the increases in the cost of fuel, for instance, while the Icera is only for the foreign exchange rate.

What, do you know—you believed Napocor refunded the P19 billion as profit, about P65 billion in 2005, P59 billion in 2006 and about P60 billion in 2007.

How do we get back those billions in overcharges by Napocor? Simple—no dear.

Why does the ERC asks (begs?) Napocor to apply for rate reduction covering those from windfall profit.

And to top it all, we notice Napocor actually applies for it with-in-six-hitches.

So the ERC can issue all sorts of orders to Napocor to stop charging us, but ERC actually has no direct control over the Napocor board.

Such a control belongs in the Palace.

Gov't to spend P55B on farm sector

From page B1

the National Food Authority.

Latest report by the National Statistics Office said the year-on-year increase in the price of rice accelerated to 48 percent in June. This brought overall inflation in June to 12.4 percent, the fastest pace in 14 years.

Santos explained that the surge in prices of rice was partly attributed to the rising prices of oil in the world market. Inputs for rice production, such as pesticides and fertilizers, are oil-based.

Another reason was the sustained cold weather in some rice-producing countries that led to smaller production. The world's growing population is also a culprit as the surge in demand for the staple led to a frantic increase in its prices.

Santos said the conversion of many agricultural lands to industrial sites aggravated the problem of a tight supply of rice. "If only more of land conversion had been tighter, the rice problem could not have been this worse," Santos said.

The country's chief economist said the government was hopeful that programs to improve local rice production would shield the country from the global problem of rising prices of the staple in the future.

CDC awards Mimosa complex ...

From page B1

at the stock market.

CDC was able to privatize the leisure estate 16 years after it seized the property from a company controlled by former tourism secretary Jose Antonio Gonzalez.

In a statement posted on the CDC website, Lanz said CDC would also earn a minimum annual guarantee fund lease starting at P360 million over a 50-year term of the award, which is renewable for another 25 years.

Lanz added that MIH would invest P1 billion to develop the estate over the next five years.

After the issuance of the notice of award in MIH, both parties will enter into a 90-day memorandum of understanding to draw up a lease agreement.

MIH will pay P770 million to CDC within 15 days from the signing of a memorandum of understanding. The amount includes P460 million as the required minimum payment, P100 million as security deposit and P140 million as advance lease rental.

The balance to complete the P1.5-billion winning bid can be paid over a five-year period.

MIH was among the 10 bidders that submitted their respective terms of interest for the project. However, only 6 firms attended the pre-bidding conference last May 8.

Inviting the bid submission and opening last June 6, only Kerzner Corporation Holdings Ltd. Corp. and MIH gave their respective offers.

CDC said disavowed were disqualified "on a technicality" because it failed to submit a bid security, a required vital document.

A bid security is a guarantee that the bidder will not default in its offer which must be submitted with the bid documents on the date of bid opening.

GMA TV launched in NZ, Australia

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

GMA NETWORK INC. AND ITS INTERNATIONAL subsidiary channels, GMA Pinoy TV and GMA Life TV, and radio stations DWLS and DXBB were launched recently in Australia and New Zealand through UBI World TV.

Dubbed, "UBI Pinoy," the service was launched in Sydney on June 23 in a ceremony attended by Philippine diplomats, Filipino-Australian community leaders and leading personalities in Australian and New Zealand media and business.

The New Zealand launch was held earlier at the official Philippine Independence Day celebration hosted by the Philippine Embassy in Wellington.

GMA Pinoy TV is the Kapuso Network's first international channel. It airs some of the country's top-rating GMA programs from the Philippines. Aside from Australia and New Zealand, it is also available in the United States, Canada, Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong, Guam, Saipan, Papua New Guinea, the Middle East, North Africa, Europe and the British Indian Ocean Territory of Diego Garcia.

Launched last this year, GMA Life TV is the network's second international channel. More than just providing mainstream entertainment, this channel engages viewers with its lineup of programs that feature the Filipinos' lifestyle and interests. It is also available in Japan, Papua New Guinea, Australia, New Zealand, the Middle East, North Africa and Europe.

UBI World TV is a leading content aggregator of non-English programming from different parts of the world and is the pioneer multi-terrestrial subscription TV and radio broadcaster to Oceania.

BANK OPPORTUNITY! PRIME PROPERTY

PORT BONIFACIO GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL UNIT

Why rent when you can own one? Prevailing rent rate is P 938 psf/month. Own a unit now for a monthly amortization of only P 70, 444 plus downpayment!

Ideal for a variety of business such as restaurant, spa, clinic, retail shop, coffee shop, office, bank, etc. Near St. Luke's Hospital, condo & BPO.

Status: Pre-selling, completion date: June 2009/ Total Area: 96.5 sqm

For details, call 840-869-2000

Website: magnificentmansions.blogspot.com

Email: magnificentmans@yahoo.com

From the Ivatans of Batanes to the Tawi-tawians of Tawi-Tawi Unites the Filipino

JRS EXPRESS

Serving the Filipino since 1960

www.jrs-express.com

Last chance to win

P5 Million

in PSBank's Monthly Millions!

6.00% Guaranteed

- Minimum of PhP 50,000
- 5-year placement, tax-free
- Accessible monthly income

Join now. Promo runs up to July 31, 2008. Grand draw is on August 8, 2008.

PSBank Prime Time Deposit

RESTAURANT & RETAIL

POINT OF SALE PACKAGES

POS

Peso ...

From page B1

"With inflation continuing to surprise on the upside and inflation expectations rising faster than we anticipated, we now judge that more monetary tightening will be needed to stabilize inflation expectations, and that interest rates will rise the year's decline," he said.

Tesdaco is projecting a total 200 basis point increase in the BSP's overnight borrowing rate this year, bringing the benchmark policy rate to 7 percent by year's end.

Meanwhile, the dollar's sweltered strength against the peso has prompted many Filipinos to hold even more tightly to savings kept in the banking system's foreign currency deposit units (FCDUs).

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday that as of end-May this year, FCDU deposits increased to $19.32 billion, or $72 million higher than the level in the previous month.

"The month-on-month net increase was due to the rise in resident deposits," the BSP said.

Compared to a year ago, the FCDU deposits rose by $0.93 billion or 5.05 percent over a year ago.

Air ...

From page B1

Spread the reduction in the airline's flights to a telephone conversation with the investors, although he did not disclose additional details.

The airline's decision to scale operations to Davao, Zamboanga and Cagayan de Oro will leave only its sister carrier Philippine Airlines and Cebu Pacific serving those cities.

With the suspension of operations in three Mindanao cities, Air Philippines will now have only 19 domestic destinations, with more and more routes being served by recently acquired Bombardier Q300 and Q400 turboprop aircraft.

The airline has eight Boeing 737s in its fleet, and prior to the route reductions, used them to service 12 domestic destinations from Iloilo in Manila and Cebu.

Air Philippines has already announced earlier its plan to completely ground by 2010, although it has yet to announce their replacement.

ICAP recognizes Sun Life Prosperity Funds for exemplary returns

The Sun Life Prosperity Funds, managed and distributed by Sun Life Asset Management Company, Inc. was given six awards by the Investment Company Association of the Philippines, Inc. (ICAP) last June 17 in the ICAP Annual awards event. ICAP is composed of 28 tenure mutual fund organizations in the Philippines whose goal is to promote mutual funds as a lucrative investment vehicle and to safeguard investors.

The Sun Life Prosperity Funds was cited specifically for its Bond Fund, Balanced Fund and Phil. Equity Fund based on the merits of variety and exemplary returns of these three funds that have consistently surpassed benchmarks. As of end-mid 2007, the Balanced Fund received two awards for its high returns of 17.20% (one-year) and 20.08% (three-year). Equity Fund also received two awards for its high returns of 29.98% (one-year) and 21.89% (three-year).

The Prosperity Funds was also cited by ICAP for being the biggest family of mutual funds in the country today. It is presently composed of seven (7) funds namely, Bond Fund, Balanced Fund, Phil. Equity Fund, Money Market Fund, GS (Dollar) Fund, Secretaries Fund, Dollar Advantage and Dollar Abundance funds. These are the only funds that permit four inter-fund transfers every year without extra charges.

"We are very pleased with ICAP's recognition and we hope to continue to surpass the benchmark for each of the funds," said Sun Life Philippines President & CEO Henry Herrera. "We are proud to have earned the trust and confidence of our investors and our peers. Our funds offer great flexibility as each fund has a different investment objective to address the varied needs of investors. We understand that investors' needs may change over time, hence, we allow inter-fund transfers once a year in this manner."

"Through the Sun Life Prosperity Funds, investing becomes easy and simple because we have a team of highly competent investment managers who will leverage the pool of risks for our investors according to the set fund objectives and philosophy," Herrera said.

Sun Life Asset Management Company, Inc. is a member of the Sun Life Financial group of companies, a leading international financial services organization providing a diverse range of wealth accumulation and protection products and services to individual and corporate customers. Chartered in 1865, Sun Life Financial and its partners today have operations in key markets worldwide including Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Japan, Indonesia, India, China and Bermuda, with total assets under management of CN$344B billion as of December 2007.

PHILIPPINE INSTITUTE OF CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

PICPA Building, 708 Shaw Boulevard
Mandaluyong City

NOTICE OF MEETING
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

To ALL PICPA Members:

In accordance with the provisions of Article XIII, Section 1 and 3 of the By-Laws of the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants, notice is hereby given that the Annual Membership Meeting will be on Friday, July 25, 2008 at 1:00 pm at the Bahia, Hotel Intercontinental, Makati City.

AGENDA
1. Call to Order
2. Proof of Publication of Notice of Meeting
3. Certification as to Presence of Quorum
4. Reading and Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting
5. Business Arising from the Minutes
6. Report of the President
7. Report of the Treasurer
8. New Business
9. Determination of the place of the next annual meeting
10. Adjournment

We urge all members to attend the Annual Membership Meeting. For members who cannot be present in person, please accomplish and return to us the general proxy form. The general proxy form can be downloaded from the PICPA website www.picpa.com.ph or can be obtained from the PICPA National and Chapter Offices.

Carmelita D. Nazar
National Secretary

FranklinCovey & CLCI invite you to

Leadership, Trust and Enterprise Competitiveness

An Executive Forum

Don't miss the rare convergence of CEOs of built-to-last organizations as they discuss TRUST as a strategic leadership and competitive advantage!

TRUST AS A COMPETITIVE LEADERSHIP STRATEGY!

Presenter: Dr. Blaine Lee
FOUNDING VICE PRESIDENT & SENIOR CONSULTANT FOR FRANKLINCOVEY
AUTHOR, THE POWER PRINCIPLE

Don't miss it!

Our distinguished panel of CEOs:
Edgar Chua, PRESIDENT & CEO, PILIPINAS SHELL
Jim Lafferty, PRESIDENT, ING PHILIPPINES
Rev. Bienvenido Nebres, S.J., PRESIDENT, ATENEO DE MANILA UNIVERSITY
James Velasquez, PRESIDENT, IBM PHILIPPINES, INC.

JULY 14, 2008
3:00 - 6:00 PM, BALLROOM
RENAISSANCE MAKATI CITY HOTEL
PHP 3,500.00 +VAT
PHP 3,500.00 +VAT
For more information, call: 8172720 (Ariane/Cookie)
4208401, 4208480, 4208480 (Fax)
or visit: www.clci.ph/executive.html

FranklinCovey

MAKE TRUST YOUR STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE!

NEW!!!

Leading at the SPEED OF TRUST

15-16 JULY 2008
8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Renaissance Makati City Hotel
www.clci.ph/trust.html

For inquiries and reservation, CALL US AT: 817 2720 loc 137 or 426 0489 to 91

People, Events & Products

Editor Aries Espinosa

Eco-volunteerism brings out the best in fast-food crew

EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERS FROM nearby Jollibee stores traded their aprons for brooms during the Agoncillo Day 2008 clean-up effort at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) Complex. Although it was large-ly a symbolic activity, the volunteers had high hopes that their participation can start a chain of positive change.

"Dami namen nalipat nagwalis-walis pang mga araw na 'yun! (We swept many things that day!)," said Jollibee employee Liberty Gaston. Jollibee Hotel Plaza store manager Rodrigo Jose may magsimula, at marami na nang nasimulan! (It has to start with one person, and people will readily follow!)."

Gaston, along with fellow Jollibee employees, joined other corporate volunteers, NGOs, athletes and government representatives at the event spearheaded by the CCP and the Embassy of the Republic of Singapore in cooperation with the Earth Day Network Philippines. The event aimed to raise awareness on water pollution and conservation.

Agni is only one of the employee volunteerism opportunities that the leading fast food chain made available to employees this year through Jollibee Foundation. The foundation has also been coordinating employee volunteerism for disaster relief efforts, feeding programs and in building houses for the poor.

"Being in the business of serving Filipinos, it's very important for our employees to be involved in community activities," explained executive director Gina Lopez-Magsaysay. "Apart from helping families that work is something more than personal and meaningful, it shows how their individual contributions are valued, not just by the company but by the very people they are serving. It's also a way for the company to express its support for initiatives that are good for the community."

TOYOTA FINANCIAL GRANTED QUASI-BANKING LICENSE

Toyota Financial Services Philippines Corporation (TFS Philippines) was recently awarded a quasi-banking license by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP). TFS Philippines is owned by Toyota Financial Services Corporation, a Japan-based leading financial services group wholly-owned by Toyota Motor Corporation, and the Manila-based Metrobank Group, the parent of Toyota's global network of sales finance companies, the company services the customers of Toyota through financing and leasing services, as well as wholesale financing for Toyota dealers. Eric Ramos (second from left), president and chief executive officer of TFS Philippines, and Metrobank Group chairman George Ty (center) are flanked by Toyota Motor Philippines Corporation executive vice president Jose Maria Alapont (left) and Metrobank president Fabian Dee (right). Also present during the ceremony were (from left) BSP acting director Jaime Christopher Bunyi; TFS Philippines senior vice president Cesi Manzanares; TFS Philippines president Bob Fleischer; BSP assistant governor Nelly Valderrama; TFS Philippines chairman Antonio Alvarez Jr.; TFS Philippines treasurer Dr. Daniel Go; TFS Philippines vice president Jennifer Wood; and TFS Philippines comptroller Rosario Fabella.

JOLLY TIME CITED BEST POPCORN

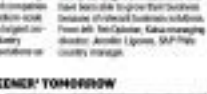
The Asian Pacific Snacks Council has recently cited Jolly Time as "Most Outstanding Popcorn" during the 40th Annual Asia-Pacific Excellence Awards (Apex) held at Megatrade Hall. Dinner in photo are awards chair Fidelito Salgado, Jolly Time president Rodolfo Ang representing Jolly Time and Tropa Commercial, Philippines Vanessa Bautista and Apex chair Jonathan Nieves. For more details, log on to www.worldsnacknetwork.com.

KAISA IS SPONSOR IN SAP BUSINESS SUMMIT 2008

Kaisa Consulting, the premiere SAP solutions and services partner in the Philippines, signed up as the Platinum sponsor of the SAP Business Summit 2008 this coming July 23 and 24 at the Grand Ballroom of the Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong. Some of the country's biggest and highest-performing business and IT event of the year, the SAP Business Summit 2008 will bring together the widest range of companies ranging from small and medium-scale enterprises to the country's biggest corporations to learn from industry thought leaders, trends, trends in business solutions as well as learnings from customers who have been able to grow their business because of relevant business solutions. From left: Ed Catindoy, Kaisa managing director; Jennifer Lipscomb, SAP Philippines country manager.

TREES FOR A 'GREENER' TOMORROW

Sisters Anne, Marcia, as part of its corporate social responsibility (CSR) program, recently held a tree planting activity at the Ipo Dam in Norzagaray, Bulacan. Guided by Andrea Millan-Arbaiza, the team's greeter at manager, Dario Alano Reyes, director of human resources, and corporate communications manager, Sharmaine Manglal, training manager, Bernadeyne participated in a day-long activity to plant 500 seedlings on the bank per Manila Representative Office Administrator and Human Resources (ROHR). Headed by Julie Mondejar, women band during the event. Sisters Hotel Manila will next reach out to its community by holding a Dental and Medical Mission slated for August this year. The team plans also to hold a conservation to acquaint the new community as well as its guests. In photo are Andrea Millan-Arbaiza (center) with Sisters Hotel Manila employees on tree planting.



UP School of Economics Grand Alumni Homecoming

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES SCHOOL OF Economics invites all its graduates to the grand reunion on Sept. 5, 6 p.m. at the CPAE auditorium. Honored by the class of 1983, the reunion features stage luminary Bert Lozquiosa and special guest, Jun Suarez, who are both graduates of the prestigious college. The homecoming coincides with the centennial celebration of UP Pre-Engineering, said Emelie Mendoza at 928-0111.

The road to recovery

THE MANILA MEDICAL CENTER'S DEPARTMENT of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PMR) will be observing the National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation Week on July 13-19, with a line-up of educational events focused on helping people who have experienced a disabling illness or traumatic injury to live a meaningful and productive life. Manila Med will also be holding lectures and lay forums be conducted by rehabilitation specialists and therapists. Topics to be tackled include proper positioning, transfers and mobility (July 13, 2-3 p.m. at the Multipurpose Hall); fall prevention (July 15, 1-3 p.m. at the Lobby Hall); living with osteoporosis (July 17, 1-3pm at the Lobby Hall); and arthritis (July 19, 1-3 p.m. at the Lobby Hall). Registration is free but reservation is required for the lectures and lay fora, which include educational materials and snacks. Interested parties are advised to sign up with the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Basement Level, Manila Med or call direct line 541-0641.

Politics: Positively coffee

POWER, A PIONEER IN SHARED COFFEE MANUFACTURING, OFFERS a variety of delightful beverages in many countries including the Philippines. The grandchild of Polska Coffee comes from the finest coffee beans developed from a variety of techniques to ensure that consumers enjoy no less than an exceptional cup of coffee. It's a journey that officially begins with the selection, and ultimately, delivering a perfect coffee experience. If you want coffee with a twist, try Polska Milk Coffee. It has the rich blend of authentic brewed beans and the creamy taste of milk at a very affordable price. With Polska Coffee, you can now enjoy your favorite coffee anywhere, anytime. Polska Coffee is now available in selected outlets in all leading supermarkets nationwide.

A guide to public officials and businessmen

THE CENTER FOR GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES (TEL. 842-1146 or 08 cmma agbp.org.ph) is inviting all public servants — lawmakers, cabinet officials, governors, mayors, administrators, treasurers and other national and local public servants, GOCC officials, PNP and military officers — and business people dealing with the government as well as lawyers to attend this 2-day governance seminar entitled: "Preventive and Remedial Actions Against Graft and Corruption Lawsuits" scheduled on Thursday and Friday, Aug. 14 and 15, at The Peninsula Manila, Makati City. The objective of this 2-day GBCG accredited seminar is to teach public officials and businessmen how to protect themselves against graft and corruption charges and how to defend themselves against them. It will suggest their well-proven strategies and best practices from solutions to avoid and quash graft and corruption lawsuits. In this manner, they will be able to align their programs, projects and policies to ensure that these comply with the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act. The lectures will include handling government contracts and other fiscal transactions, planning for damages against malicious prosecution as well as pre-trial strategies to post-judgment remedies. Lectures and learning activities are participative. Speakers and resource persons include Edilberto Sandoval, former solicitor general Francisco Chavez, government contracts specialist lawyer Jose A. Bernas, subject-matter expert lawyer Arturo M. De Castro, U.M., M.E.P., and lawyer Ely Pamatmat and Pastor, president Dr. Victor B. Dulalia. Pre-registration is required for this "one time limited seats only" seminar.

ISIPP PSLIS seminar-workshop

THE METROPOLITAN SOCIETY OF INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS OF THE Philippines (MSIPP) in cooperation with the Philippine Society of Librarians and Information Specialists (PSLIS) will have a seminar-workshop on "Information and Library Centers Value-Added Service: e-Library and Content Management" at Diliman Hotel, Lucena City on July 15-17. The seminar-workshop aims to promote participants with the latest development on libraries and information centers to cope up with the challenges in the IT environment which is geared towards service enhancement. Inclusive in the workshop is educational tour to various libraries, institutions, and other historical and tourist sites in Lucena City and Quezon province. For registration, contact (02) 9100007, 359 0113, 8000351 - 2044 loc 4144/7108, 359 0113 loc 129.

APC, a center of excellence in IT

APC MULTIMEDIA SITE A PARTNER OF IBM RED HAT ACADEMY, an established academic program for open-source leader Red Hat to teach Linux and open source skills to students. With the partnership, APC becomes the first institution in the Philippines to provide training in open source software, giving its students a strong competitive edge as open source adoption ramps up in the region. Asia-Pacific College has also partnered with Bandica Software Corp. of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Bandica, through its local office in Makati City, has joined APC's full-time internship programs and will offer practicum opportunities or on-the-job training (OJT) to APC's students who are enrolled in its Information Technology (IT) program ensuring such training for graduates.

YFEO INAUGURATES NEW HOME IN TONDO MANILA

Just recently, Young Focus for Education and Development (YFEO) has inaugurated its new home in Tondo, Manila. It is a realization of its dream of providing easy-access shelter for students who struggle with unhealthy and environment that would foster their academic life including school work. Young Focus for Education and Development Foundation Inc is a newly projected Young Social International – an organization that has been officially founded in The Netherlands. In 1982 it made a successful start in supporting the poorest and most deprived children in the Philippines by giving these children an chance to go to school by sponsoring them and giving the much-needed support from elementary school to college or university education. Young Focus concentrates in supporting children who have to work on the garbage dump for income. It's a sponsor-a-day program. The Young Focus team

extends these children a helping hand by giving them a chance to go to school. Aside from sponsoring children, Young Focus International also helps these children comfort from daily students' life struggle. A new building that offers a dynamic, modern environment, including a library, computer room, laboratory, workshop room, lounge area, office and kitchen has been erected for these students. The YFEO staff is diverse in the assistance over the students fully concerned to take them under professional and constructive society.

SURF LANGHAP LINIS CHALLENGE PROMO WINNER

On June 27, avant-net store owner was made a millionaire by Surf Langhap Linis Challenge promo. Mrs Magdalena Salinas from Cagayan de Oro, visited Pinahud Island for the winning drop of a Surf Tablet powder sachet. The Surf Langhap Linis Challenge united local water lovers to experience the good clean you can see and smell from Surf. Further, it gave mothers the opportunity to see instant cash prizes from P1,000, P10,000 and P1 million. Like many butterfly effect promo activities, the modest Best Ever Surf users and powders. At the turn of the promo, hundreds of Surf users were rewarded with instant cash prizes from their trusted laundry friend. Surf continues to use Surf and be among the hundreds of "wash" Surf mothers to win instant cash prizes in the Langhap Linis Challenge. Prizes can still be redeemed until Aug. 30.

ALWAYS LEADING THE WAY

Cisco is one of the companies in Silicon Valley that has been consistently ranked among the 100 best companies to work for by Fortune Magazine for the past 11 years. Cisco is the world's most awarded tech company. Fortune lists employees and executives in the process of evaluating the superior values to distinguished clients. It outlines seven approaches and set-of-assessment guidelines in its research report available online at www.fortune.com. In photo, during the "Cisco wrap" awards are Geraldine Zamanilo, LBP ZCMC operations and maintenance department; Bevyn Hernando Dalmacio, LBP's corporate secretary; Ary Jimenez of Datacenter senior manager for

networking; Ed Loay Dela, MPIDC LBP partnership president and CEO; Jose Andres, MPIDC LBT advertising sales and marketing director; Kirill Matiz, e-Network existing specialist - for branding; Danny Serrano, e-Network vice president for global staffing.

NORTH BELTON MODEL UNITS UNVEILED

Ayala Communities Inc. (ACI) is introducing North Belton, a community for its affordable, mid-rise condominium project. The Alabang-at North Belton Communities. A sub-sidiary of Louis Tan's real estate arm Ayala Land Inc. (ALI), North Belton (Cebu), ACI was recently formed to serve as Cebu's corporate vehicle for the affordable housing segment. North Belton will be constructed in an expansive 10.8 hectare prime lot along the Mactan Cebu International Airport, Lapu-Lapu City, Mactan Island, Cebu. Summer City, Right across Mabolo and various areas from major shopping complexes such as Ayala Center Cebu and SM City. Its location is easily accessible to Fuente Osmeña Circle, Cebu Business Park, N. Bacalso Avenue, Cebu South Coastal Road and Cebu-Cordova Link Expressway. Cebu's first Ayala Land Premier condominium project, North Belton is set to rise in the Mactan Economic Zone 2 (MEZ 2) area. Its location is easily accessible to Fuente Osmeña Circle, Cebu Business Park, N. Bacalso Avenue, Cebu South Coastal Road and Cebu-Cordova Link Expressway. Cebu's first Ayala Land Premier condominium project, North Belton is set to rise in the Mactan Economic Zone 2 (MEZ 2) area.

visit the MRT. For more information, please call Ms. Bianca Lee at 888-1000 or 0917-8683000 or visit www.northbelton.com. Get a P 499 down payment for as low as P1,149/mo. Financing. Free senior SPF for business development. Fortune Complex, Area senior Ayala Land Inc. Andrea R. Bartolome, Bella Ann Grace T. Santos, Lorraine Jan C. Labadan to all 5 and MBA and from C. Marines from ECCA.

UNITY IN DIVERSITY

This year's batch of international SAT students from different countries at the Asian International Business College in Makati recently held a Country Call for their IBMA Executive Student President before going back to their respective countries. Kathy Bailey's Agama and Joana Maria G. Bonsucan from IBMA, Epifania N. Borja, college dean and Reinald A. Pedrangelan, area director of AIBC, in the back row from left are Andrea R. Bartolome, Bella Ann Grace T. Santos, Lorraine Jan C. Labadan to all 5 and MBA and from C. Marines from ECCA.

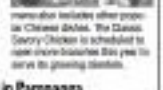
Product Files

The perfect crunch-mate

MAKE SURE YOUR KIDS EAT PURE. Nestlé Chicken Fun Nuggets along when they head to school. Now it comes in more fun shapes - Alphabet Bites, Number Crunchies, and Crazy Cut Shapes - all wrapped in extra-fun new packs with exciting games to boot. You can also mix up their appetites with Super Coconut Cutter Bites as a delicious adventure with Choco Goodies. Be creative and spoil kids with the love they both each time they open their lunchboxes.

Classic Savory Chicken opens at SM San Lazaro

THE CLASSIC SAVORY CHICKEN recently opened its SM San Lazaro branch right across the entertainment plaza. This is its the SM branch to open since the initial roll-out of the food chain last year. Introduced in 1968 by Tang brothers, the Savory Chicken is known for its distinctive taste, juicy and tender chicken. The chicken is marinated in secret spices and spices, fried with tender and juicy. The chicken is even made more delicious with the special gravy, aside from the Savory Chicken, the menu also includes other popular Chinese dishes. The Classic Savory Chicken is scheduled to open more branches this year to serve its growing clientele.



UCC Vienna Café now in Pampanga

THE PHILIPPINES' BEST COFFEE house has now expanded its operations to include Pampanga. A UCC Vienna Café is now located in SM Pampanga. UCC offers the best coffee in town as it uses the finest brewing and food selection to reduce to the barest minimum time lag between brewing the coffee and serving it. UCC also serves espresso-based coffee and health drinks. Aside from coffee, UCC also is known for its mouth-watering delicacies such as Japanese and Western Cuisine like sandwiches, Japanese pasta, Japanese rice dishes and Filipino breakfast meals and desserts. In the Philippines, UCC has now 15 branches most of which are located in Metro Manila area.

In amending corporate code, PSE eyes safeguards

Bourse also proposes mandatory dividend declaration

By Elizabeth Sandino-Lacson

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE (PSE) has a number of policies it wants to adopt under amendments to the code of good corporate governance—one of the implementing arms of rules of the country's securities laws that protects shareholder rights in publicly-owned companies.

For one, PSE president Francis Lim said companies should be required to share the bounty of good growth in earnings to its shareholders through a mandatory dividend declaration policy.

"Under the law (securities and corporate laws), a company can declare dividends only if it has unrestricted retained earnings.

"What's the implication of this? First the company must have earnings. Secondly, the earnings must be unrestricted, that is to use appropriated for a specific corporate purpose. You can't have companies to declare dividends if they don't have earnings, otherwise it will cannibalize their capital."

That suggestion was mentioned during a forum conducted by the Philippine Stock Exchange, which invited the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) to address him on several issues concerning Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), the country's largest power distributor.

Lim proposed that the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), which is part of a body reviewing the code, should mandate the dividend declaration, yet allow the companies concerned to determine the cash dividend rate.

Lim also said that independent directors should be nominated by minority shareholders, instead of majority shareholders, to prevent abuse of power relating to board actions.

"Independent directors are usually elected because if they were against the majority when nominated there, they may be removed from the board next year," Lim said.

"So they should be elected by the minority so they will really represent the minority interest. The question is, how would the law define the minority?"

Related to this, Lim also said certain parameters covering the accountability of board directors should be established.

"For example, an independent director knows that the company has engaged in a related party transaction to deal with companies with some shareholders," Lim cited.

"What is [the director's] accountability when that contract turns out to be detrimental to the company?"

The PSE president also recommended that certain parameters should also be established for shareholder inspection of corporate documents.

"This is the right given under the Corporation Code to a stockholder to inspect corporate books. He (has the) commitment and oath," Lim said. "But it's not clear if all the documents I am covered."

Eagle Equities Inc. president Ferdinand Dy Buncio said this right is prone to abuse.

"What if you earn one share, are you given the right to inspect contracts and trade secrets?" Buncio asked.

"This could be a dangerous provision, especially if the party inspecting is a banker or has adverse intentions," he added. "What if you are Asia Brewery and you are demanding the right to look at San Miguel's trade secrets? It's a two-edged sword."

Airline offers new round of seat sale

By Rizz T. Olchondra

IN ANOTHER MOVE TO STIMULATE the travel market during the lean seasons, Cebu Pacific has allocated more than 300,000 seats for its seven-week seat sale.

Cebu Pacific said in a statement on Wednesday that the seat sale would cover domestic and regional travel from July 12 to Oct. 18.

Tickets for the promo, which are non-refundable, can be purchased from July 18 to 31.

"While cutback modes of public transport are increasing their fares, we would like to assure the public that flying with Cebu Pacific will continue to stay affordable," said Candice Iyog, Cebu Pacific spokesperson. "The seat sale also hopes to encourage more tourist arrivals during the conventional lean months of July to August and September."

Cebu Pacific is offering a P888++ one-way fare from Manila to Kuala Lumpur and Kota Kinabalu in Malaysia.

The airline is also offering an P888++ one-way fare from Manila to Bangkok, Guangzhou, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh, Hong Kong, Jakarta, Kaohsiung, Macau, Shanghai, Singapore, Taipei and Xiamen.

The P888++ fare is also extended on GSIS direct international services to Singapore and Hong Kong from Cebu and Davao.

For the domestic network, Cebu Pacific offers all-inclusive fares of P699 for services from Manila to Legaspi, P999 for flights from Manila to Virac, and P1,499 for Manila to Masbate services. Fares for intra-Visayas and Mindanao flights range from P699 to P999.

"We hope that many will act this and book their flights for unforgettable vacations, or call our reservations hotline (02) 7020888 or (032) 2388888," Iyog said.

Now in its 13th year, CEB has the youngest fleet in the Philippines with its A319s, eight A320s, and two ATR72-500 aircraft. The airline expects to increase its fleet to 23 by the end of 2006.

Sailing the BIMP-Eaga seas

MINDANAWORLD

Jyji Bagaso-Ikani

THE SEA LINKAGE BETWEEN TWO trading points, or among several others, is very important considering that this is needed in fostering the movement of goods and products in a lower cost.

Businessmen and traders will always want to lower transportation cost.

Number that viable small-to-best sea taking place in the sea linkages within the Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines (BIMP) East Asean Growth Area (Eaga), in an effort to facilitate tourism promotion, the sea linkage proposals have not improved that much despite the signing of two memoranda of agreement last year among the four countries.

Initiatives

Based on the report of the Mindanao Economic Development Council, as a result of the meeting in April in Bandar Seri Begawan, the capital of Brunei Darussalam, there was no significant movements regarding the sea linkages among the four countries.

However, the report mentioned some "flagship programs and projects" that the top officials of the four countries were considering.

Among others, the report cited the discussion on a proposal for a tariff reduction of roll-on roll-off ship spare parts between Zamboanga and Sandakan in Malaysia.

In that meeting, Philippine representatives warned the Indonesian and Philippine governments to enter into a bilateral arrangements that would reduce tariffs for these parts. For Malaysia, the agreement will be implemented pursuant to Sandakan port.

The Philippines also requested that ships be accommodated in a roll-on roll-off terminal.

Today, only the Zamboanga-Sandakan shipping route is being served by two Zamboanga City-based companies, the Moore Shipping Lines and the Sampaguita Shipping Lines.

Key point

The servicing of the General Santos City Bitung, Indonesia route has been suspended.

The implementation of a memorandum of understanding on the "sea-land" concept and promoting efficient integrated sea linkages" was also one of the key points explored.

Officials of the four countries raised the issue of updating cargo manifest on the development of port facilities, including the privatization of some of them. This is necessary because this will allow each of them to come up with their respective plans on sea linkages, taking into consideration the viability of taking the ports of their trading partners.

The representative of the Asian Development Bank, the sub-regional advisor, was tasked to update the four countries on the pre-investment study that would identify the "shortfall in ports to facilitate tourism" especially among the designated BIMP-Eaga gateway ports and develop project profiles for bridging the performance and capacity gaps as mandated by the BIMP-Eaga MOU on sea linkages."

There is so much that has to be done to improve sea linkages, and it will also require time and political will of all stakeholders, both government and private sector, to make these sea linkages sustainable. Volume of traffic, both passengers and goods, have to be present. Here business activities have to be created.

Optimism

I share the optimism of those who are involved in these endeavors, taking note of their efforts in promoting trade among the four countries.

As a leader of the Mindanao business sector, it is my duty to see to it that every place, big or small, is developed to affect the thrust of making the sub-regional trading bottleneck economy.

Jyji Bagaso Ikani is an advocate for the development of the region. She is chair of Jyji Bagaso Foundation, president, Phil. Chi Lenos Alliance and Mindanao Inst. for Science, Innovation; Mindanao representative of the Export Development Council. E-mail comments to jyji@philippinecarrier.com.

BACK IN THE BLACK

VMC now sets its sights on power business

By Doris C. Dorrido

(Second of three parts)

WHEN ARTHUR AGUILAR, THE CHAIRMAN/CEO of Victorias Milling Co., took charge in 2000 to help rationalize the ailing Victorias Milling Corp., one of the first things he did was to hire a third-party company to audit and measure down to the last grain VMC's sugar stocks, matching them with the spoilage.

With this reform, sugar inventory control was improved and properly documented. Even the weighing scales were padlocked to prevent manipulation.

One of the strengths of VMC, Aguilar says, is the quality of its people.

He points out that this is one of the few companies in the country with its own "soul," operating within shorty kilt communities that filled its human resource requirement for generations.

"While they had a group of officers who were membership oriented, the senior middle level executives were very competent and professional," Aguilar says. "Many of them were third generation employees. So you have the competence of people who were left and cut off anything that's a cash burn."

One of its biggest cash burns was an elaborate railroad system which was 200 kilometers long—the second largest system in the country next to the Philippine National Railways.

The rail system, which was used to to transport sugarcanes, cut across impoverished communities, spawning hordes of thieves who stole vital parts of the railroad, usually the ties that hold the tracks of the railroad.

Under the VMC rehabilitation plan, the railroad system was phased out and the company henceforth relied on trucks instead.

White knight

While the books made clear the company earned from the debt restructuring, VMC improved its roads, upgraded its mills, boilers and power-generating equipment.

A 13-megawatt Kawasaki turbo generator was acquired to provide steam and sufficient power supply for the factory.

Initially, the creditor banks favored the entry of a new investor that would control majority of the company and infuse fresh capital. But bidding proved to be a failure and an white knight came to the rescue. The banks were then forced to accept lower concessions, particularly by increasing the portion of debts that had to be converted into equity about 60 percent of VMC is now owned by the creditor banks, based on the company's latest financial statement.

A P500-million cash infusion was needed to boost its operations, and that's when someone engineer Lucio Tan came into the picture in 2003.

The tycoon, whose two banking arms, Philippine National Bank and Allied Bank, had been exposure to the sugar firm, advanced money to Victorias at a giveaway interest rate of 1.5 percent for five years. This loan matured last April and had been repaid using internally generated cash.

Aguilar stepped down as CEO of the sugar company after the Lucio Tan group came in.

In 2004, Aguilar was succeeded by Rhoderick Bugay, a mechanical engineer by profession who has been with VMC since 1983.

Last year, the Lucio Tan group of companies, purchased through Fastgain Holdings an additional 13.68 percent stake in VMC from the Shipped Onsite Station Foundation. Combined with the interest of PNB and Allied Bank, the target is now the single biggest stakeholder owning about a quarter of the company.

Dante Bayle, MBA, PNB president and VMC chair, cites four factors behind VMC's successful turnaround.

- A good management team is in place, led by people who know the business.
- Banks must be willing to let go for a while, in fact the company recapitalized at the beginning, to jumpstart rehabilitation.
- The industry per se, must make business sense and, in this case, sugar is an essential commodity and basic food input.

Aguilar, now president of the National Transmission Corp., has no doubt that VMC's turnaround will be sustained.

"VMC in point now to be able to withstand any reduction in sugar prices because our levels are much lower now," Aguilar says.

FEATURE **Back to the PSE**

VMC is now on its third year of profitability and its shares may soon resume trading at the Philippine Stock Exchange.

The company also plans to be go at its remaining white elephants and hedge against commodity price volatility by going into the potentially lucrative business of power generation.

During its peak milling season, VMC has excess power that it can sell to cash-deficit companies. The sugar firm is now engaged in talks for the sale of it megawatts in excess power to a cement company that currently draws its resource from the national grid, VMC president Bugay says.

Bugaoo, a by-product of sugarcane processing, is used as principal fuel for steam production in the sugar mills. Bonsai is utilized for power production. In sugar processing, however, means to improve the efficiency of mill operations can result in excess bagasse that can be utilized in generate electricity for export to the national power grid.

Aguilar, now National Transmission Corp. president, says VMC could have gone into the biomass business as early as 2002 when a foreign investor offered to tie up with it or we can-or VMC.

"It would have shut down all boilers and generate power without problem, and I could have exported 13 megawatts of excess power to Negros, which right now is power-deficient," Aguilar says.

That option is now back on the table.

"We have to put up a distillery," says Miss Bugay, adding that is one for the mush. We've got an offer before to go into co-generation. We can generate enough power to supply the surrounding community using our byproduct. That one we can look into."

Among the country's sugar mills, VMC now operates the longest at 120 months per year, compared to an 80 to 90 crop cycle. The company uses the "off-peak" months, July and August, for repair and maintenance of its equipment.

Cogeneration projects are encouraged by the government to save on fossil fuel dependency, an additional way to mobilize private sector resources to complement more limited power development program. Studies show that biomass cogeneration, involving residues generated from the processing of agricultural crops like sugar, has a huge potential equivalent to 3,000 megawatts power for the national grid.

Bioethanol

The country's sugar industry has been processing power since its earliest days, but mostly for internal requirements. Much of the sugarcane waste that remained after the milling season and disposed through incineration could be used to generate additional power.

"Another area we're looking into is ... bioethanol, but because of that demands on how long high prices of oil will last," Miss says.

According to Bugay, one factor that will help the industry is the ethanol project, "because the main purpose is really to convert sugarcane into ethanol so we can maintain a certain level of sugar supply to the market that will stabilize the price."

Aguilar, a proponent of the bioethanol project in San Carlos in Negros, says that for as long as land devoted for food production is not given up for bioethanol ventures, it won't create any problem for the country.

He is addressing concerns across the globe that the increasing use of agricultural crops for bioethanol would invest out food supply and contribute to the upsurge in food prices.

Although prospects loom bright for VMC's complete rehabilitation, it is still a long way from regaining complete financial health," the company said in its annual report for the fiscal year ending Aug. 31, 2007.

(To be continued)

BFAD eases life for food exporters

By Rommel W. Dionisio

A GROUP OF FOOD EXPORTERS HAS signed a memorandum of agreement with the Bureau of Food and Drugs to ease members' application for licenses and registration of products.

According to the Export Development Council (EDC), the agreement between BFAD and the Philippine Food Processors and Exporters Organization (Philfoodex) will better serve the needs of exporters and producers of food and pharmaceutical products.

The pact, signed on June 30 during a meeting of the EDC, authorizes Philfoodex to facilitate its members' applications for licenses to operate and certificates of product registration.

BFAD has chosen to full support behind the export industry, the EDC said, citing the food and drug agency's moves to accelerate its systems, which is set to be completed in September.

Also, the EDC's national cluster team agreement team has recommended for the food processing industry to tie up with the tourism sector of Bohol, described to be a major contributor in the local economy.

According to team consultant Celerino L. Hilbero, Bohol plans to further promote its delicacies, like peanut kisses, sun prawns and other peanut and cashew based products and pastries, apart from its tourist attractions.

This developed as the Center for International Expositions and Missions, a part of the Department of Trade and Industry, recently announced that it was eyeing food tourism as a marketing channel, especially for Central Visayas.

Amor Cabotaj, DTI director for Region 7, explained that under the initiative, selected food companies from the region would be given product development and packaging assistance to boost their competitiveness in the international market.

"Aside from tourism destinations, we also want Central Visayas to be known for its processed food and ethnic delicacies made from indigenous ingredients that could be used for pasalubong (gifts)," Cabotaj said.

Some of the country's most popular tourism destinations, such as Cebu, Bohol, Negros Oriental and Siquijor, are located in Central Visayas.

Cebu is known for food items like tsupalko (cookies), otoy (muffin), danggit (sun-dried fish), dried mangoes, danggit (salted dried fish), otap (sweet biscuits made from flour, sugar and coconut), and ensaymada (Filipino version of rice bread).

Bohol is famous for its calamay (sweet concoction of glutinous rice, coconut milk and sugar), tinumpay (purple yam-based delicacy) and peanut cookies.

Negros Oriental is known for budbud (sticky delicacy), budbud tsokolate, and fruity sweets, as well as banana sticks and peanut products.

BUSINESS

Gov't budget gap seen at ₱45B in '09

Higher spending for social services

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE GOVERNMENT EXPECTS ITS BUDget deficit to hit P45 billion or P46 billion next year, with public spending seen exceeding revenue due to the need to jumpprime the economy.

This was according to the National Economic and Development Authority, which also said the projected deficit for next year was equivalent to about 0.5 percent of the country's estimated gross domestic product.

"What we really want is for conditions to improve so that we can go for a balanced budget by next year. But more likely we are at a budget deficit of about 0.5 percent of GDP because of the need to spend more," acting Socio Director General Augusto Santos said yesterday in a press conference.

The government, which has been in the red since 1998, had targeted to post a balanced budget in 2008. But the oil and food crises prompted it to spend more this year on social services, including subsidies for the poor.

For this year, the government is seen to post a manageable deficit of 0.9% billion.

While spending would still be high, Santos said the likely increase in revenue would allow the government to post a smaller deficit in 2009.

By 2010, according to the revised Bued program, the government is expected to achieve a balanced budget.

The Department of Finance earlier said it had to set aside its original objective of posting a balanced budget this year to prevent a drastic downturn in the growth of the economy. If public spending for 2008 would remain as originally programmed, GDP growth would be too low.

The government originally programmed to raise P1.230 trillion in revenue—including taxes and proceeds from sale of public assets—and limit its spending to the amount. But the government decided to spend P96.3 billion more than the original program to fund more social services projects.

Already taking into account the P96.3 billion in additional spending for the year, the Socio said the economy would likely grow by between 5.7 and 6.6 percent.

This is still slow compared with the actual GDP growth in 2007 at 7.2 percent, the highest in three decades. Last year's economic environment was much better, as inflation and interest rates were benign. The peso, which has depreciated this year, also posted record highs last year.

The surge in oil and rice prices in the world market triggered increases in the country's inflation rate. Although an agricultural country, the Philippines is the world's biggest importer of rice. It also imports almost 96 percent of its oil requirements.

The Socio said high inflation, if sustained, would force households to tighten their spending. In turn, profits of businesses would decline and economic growth would slow down.

The Socio said in a statement that besides the Philippines, 35 other countries were suffering from the food crisis. These include Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Somalia and Bolivia. Almost all countries are suffering from the energy crisis, it added.

To help Filipinos, especially the poor, cope with high oil and food prices, the Socio said the government had to implement various subsidy programs.

RP shrimp output expected to double in 5 years

By Amy R. Remo

AGRICULTURE OFFICIALS EXPRESSED optimism that the country would double its shrimp production to 100,000 metric tons in five years and regain its status as one of the world's top exporters of this product.

Agriculture Undersecretary Jesse Emmanuel Dasal said the lifting of the ban on the importation of Pacific white shrimp from Ecuador would result in the speedy rebound of the shrimp industry.

With the lifting of the ban, shrimp producers can now embark on large-scale production of the *Penaeus vannamei* or Pacific white shrimp.

"Because rumored manure farms, it requires less production inputs and has strong resistance to diseases. It is projected that the country will be able to achieve a shrimp production volume to reach of 100,000 metric tons in five years," Pastor said.

He said this volume was more than double the current yearly production of 28,000 tons of white shrimps and 24,000 tons of prawns.

Shrimp producers had expressed confidence that the Philippines could soon become the No. 2 shrimp exporter in the world, next to China.

The Philippines, which was the world's third biggest shrimp producer in the past, slid to 30th place in 2003, after losing overtakes by Mexico, Brazil, Vietnam and Bangladesh. Other big producers include Thailand, India, Indonesia and Ecuador.

Most shrimp farmers in Asia have already switched to P monoculture.

Dasal said the importation and culture of Pacific white shrimp is monitored by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR).

BFAR Director Malcolm Sarmiento said only one-and-a-half years after the government had allowed the importation of P rejuvenated hatchery capacity, the Bureau had already accredited seven maturation, breeding and larval rearing hatcheries in strategic locations in the country and certified 36 grower farms, or around 667 hectares in production area.

Among the country's fishery products, shrimps and prawns were the second highest foreign exchange earner, bringing in an average of $ 100 million a year.

Almost 68 percent of the country's shrimp production goes to the domestic market while the rest is exported to Japan, Korea, the US, Canada and Guam, among others.

Sarmiento said the Philippines had the distinct advantage of being recognized worldwide as the only shrimp-producing country that shuns the use of antibiotics in the control and prevention of diseases.

The DA banned the entry of 37 veterinary drugs in country in 2002 to protect the local sugpo or black tiger prawn from the dreaded Taura virus that had nearly wiped out shrimp farms in Japan, Taiwan and Thailand at that time.

RLC developing more BPO sites

ROBINSONS LAND CORP. THROUGH ITS office buildings and commercial-center division, is developing seven BPO and call center sites this year to expand the company's office space inventory and regional presence.

In all these projects, the company is adopting the mixed-use format, a strategy RLC pioneered when it built the Robinsons Galleria Center.

"We are currently incorporating office spaces intended for BPOs and call center operations in our shopping mall development, specifically Robinsons Lucena in Tayabas City, Robinsons Cybergate Cebu," said Henry Sy, business unit general manager for RLC's office buildings division.

Robinsons Cybergate Davao and Robinsons Cybergate Plaza in Mandaluyong City are also under construction and will be ready for occupancy next year.

These projects are in addition to two recently completed projects in Robinsons Ortigas in Manila and Cybergate Tower 2 in Bacolod City—both of are now ready for occupancy.

Industry sources said BPO and call center firms were expanding into the regions due to lower costs of operations, larger manpower pool and lower rate of employee turnover. In addition, some firms and buyers want to undertake pioneering efforts in their "Region of Choice."

The relatively lower cost of operations in the Philippines have encouraged many companies in the United States and Britain to outsource their operations to the Philippines. Doing nothing these sites even more desirable and lucrative.

RLC foresees that business for business process outsourcing and the call center industry are growing their expansion plans in several key regional urban centers.

IN THIS ISSUE
DIY: Pineapple chicken /D6
Michelin-rated menu comes to Manila /D6

LIFESTYLE
Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan

Classic 'tipid' tips for the hard times

By Rolando C. Estrada
Contributor

ONE OF MY FAVORITE posts in my staffroom when I was the school paper adviser at Manila Science High School read: Plan ahead.

At this time of rising prices, this message is most timely.

There is no room for spur-of-the-moment shutters. We, while the homemaker has made the weekly plans for her memory she must be versatile and flexible enough to take in and adjust to circumstances.

* Be go ahead and plan what you will serve for the week, but make room for adjustments. On road trips, for example, buy what you need that you see along the way. Take advantage of what is available at the time you do your weekly shopping.

* Buy only what is necessary and consumable of perishable goods. For example, for a family of two: barely week or a retired couple with no empty and buy half a bunch of banana instead of a whole bunch, half of which goes overripe but because of the heat.

* Buying the weekly supply of vegetables can be tricky. Tomatoes, squash, anyone, for example, can be kept in the vegetable crisper of the ref for several days. Others like Baguio beans, okra, eggplants are best cooked ahead and heated when to be served. Leafy vegetables are best cooked the day of purchase or as the farmer, the day after.

* When it comes to unperishables, it is best to buy in bulk. Be laundry detergents.

* Plan your baking to take advantage of the oven heat. Brownies, for example. Double the recipe and you produce three gifts of two dozen brownies for people you have to gift—your inlab doctor who doesn't charge you for consultations, the down shop owner who fixes your shirt for free, and a grandniece who is celebrating a birthday a good three weeks later.

A friend who bakes pili nuts uses, instead of her regular oven which takes longer to heat, a huge polypropylene container lit for her turbo broiler to bake her nuts. I use it, too, for my brownies, and reserve the use of the oven for delicate baking.

* Recycle. Oh, the plastic bags you use accumulate where you do your weekly marketing. I tell one sale to put my purchase of fish together with others I have purchased. Fish vendors usually use at least two plastic bags for every purchase. So for vegetable purchases, I tell my stall to minimize the plastic bags I get. The Happy Bags I get in the supermarket I use for line my garbage pails.

* Recycle also leftover food. I usually cook only enough rice for one meal so leftover rice easily goes bad in her stomach that when there is left-over rice and you don't want to eat before, now it into fried rice—simply with fried garlic, or as Japanese or Chinese Fried Rice. The richest leftover from a party can be recycled into paksiw, or treat leftovers kept from spoiling by refrigeration as a. Have a smorgasbord of them one day a week to clear the ref of leftovers.

When I taught for one year in Zamboanga, my mother's sister, with whom I stayed, served dishes food for lunch and dinner. No leftovers. Gone on three days.

Adjust, adjust, adjust.

WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS

Sylvia Reynoso-Gala Culinary Arts Studio
Since 1976
47 1ST SHAW BLVD., COR. PIOUS BLVD.
TEL. 903 671-6002 • 671-6072 • 671-6409
For the complete schedule of our new Hands On, Demonstration-Student Participation, Easy, Exact, Money Making Courses for Beginners and Non Beginners. Visit our website @
www.sylviareynosogala.com

Where to get great prime Angus beef, best carbonara, and tower of cupcakes

WHERE TO GO FOR GOOD STEAK OR good meal is a common question I get here. Fortunately, the discoveries I made on the evening of July 7 gave some answers.

My niece Maureen and nephew Quintin threw a 35th wedding anniversary lunch for their parents, Ruben and Babet Ortiz, at 22 Prime, a classy steakhouse with a fantastic view on the 22/F Discovery Suites in Ortigas, Pasig.

22 Prime is Discovery's house outlet which Chef David Pardo de Ayala is very proud of. Without a doubt he says, "Ours is the best quality of steaks, for the price, in town!"

I have no reason to doubt that. This man knows his food which, true to his New York training, is carnivore, free of pretension, nice, simple and hearty with every grain of salt and pepper in the right place.

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

22 Prime serves no less than certified prime Angus beef. De Ayala says that "of 180 cows, only two would make it to this quality, the kind that we serve."

After tasting it, I agree that it is everything a great piece of meat should be...the bite, the pure unadulterated taste of beef, char-grilled to your preference, seasoned just right with exotic sauces and condiments served with an equally delicious gamut of potatoes (which I hope they put more oil, no-little for my huge appetite!). Need I say more?

But wait, I must! That same evening, I discovered the best carbonara, done as it should be, finally! Comparable to the one served at Grand Hotel in Rome where I think it is for the best, can finally be had at 22 Prime as well.

And there's something else. It's rib-eye time that excellent, first thank god "It's Prime Rib Friday Night" is something to look forward to. Scrap for the dog fare ascots to salad bar, a hearty slice of US Certified Angus Prime Rib plus dessert. You have all that in a classic plus the most romantic times until an ambience and a view that money can't buy, for only P1,150. (For

>>PEPE'S Ribeye

WORLD CLASS SLIMMING, FITNESS, FACE AND SKIN BY SLIMMERS WORLD

CORE POWER Training plus BIOMETRICS is the Ultimate in FITNESS, FAT & CELLULITE LOSS. It's the way that Pearl Kelly lost 6 lbs. Under Medical Supervision to win the Miss Bikini Philippines - International pageant.

BUY 1 MONTH GET 1 MONTH FREE!

NO MONTHLY DUES ON LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP!
NO JOINING FEES!
CREDIT CARD INTERNAL AT 0%.
MEDICAL SUPERVISION AT ALL CENTERS.

PLUS!

BUY 15 TREATMENTS GET 15 FREE!

MESO WHITE • MESO RUINVENATION • COSMETIC FILLERS • NOTOX • CELL FACE • WAIST REMOVAL • LASER ACNE TREATMENT • PERMANENT LASER HAIR REMOVAL • FACIAL • SKIN WHITENING

ULTRALIFT
LOOK 5 YEARS YOUNGER IN JUST 30 MINUTES

CALL OUR ONE-STOP SUPER CENTERS FOR FITNESS, SKIN, BODY AND FACE.

FITNESS HOTLINE 536-3333
SKIN HOTLINE 525-8771
MOBILE NUMBER 091-SLIMMERS (75466377)

WWW.SLIMMERSWORLD.COM.PH • INQUIRE@SLIMMERSWORLD.COM.PH

HEKBOKOMOK

BY JOMAR TEJIDO

A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABEDA

FULDOM

BY PAPJAND DATUYIN AMBILONG

PUGAD BABOY

BY PH JUNIOR

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABILONIA

GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS

GLUMPIH

BY DARWIN PEREZ

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

ATOMO AND WEBBY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

LOVEMONTS

BY ELIZABETH CHERNILO

KIKO MACHINE

BY MANDI KOREEN

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Crooner Nat
6 Still pristine
11 Health reform inits.
14 Lotion spread
15 Sometimes
16 Ad __ (for each)
17 Didn't sit a spell
18 Price tag
19 Pharmacy rub
21 Hasbro/Parker rivalry
23 Hospital substance
25 Young stud
27 Party in a box
32 Sarcasm
34 Stroke
35 Logo or glob
36 Ending with ring or ring
38 Tie part
41 Only one
42 Lacking energy
44 Lion variety
46 Dingbat
47 Restless feet places
48 French article
49 Part 3 of quiz
51 Preposition and
52 Question on "SNL"
54 Family group
55 Chain-link gadget
58 Take the bus
59 Electric eels
60 Inventor Nikolay
61 Near Kuwait
62 Eagle's cry
63 Chatter's gaze
64 Hummer part
65 Dresden muscle

DOWN
1 Vinyl
2 Announcement?
3 1969 movie/western
4 Director
5 Natural-looking
6 Signs on
7 Eject
8 Wrap
9 Personal info
10 Tattle (on) to the police
11 Some vigors
12 Stocking-cap fabric
13 Directions acronym
21 Former spreader
22 Reckon
24 Mechanical excavation
25 Borscht ingredient
26 Heard sleigh
28 Had already been awarded
30 Knudsen's realm
31 Part of the cow at fairs
33 Antihistamine
36 Cleaning agent
37 Bowler
38 Ridiculously expensive
39 Cleaning implement
40 Mandrake's magic wand
43 Tiny bite
45 Cheese variety
47 Ring
50 Yes on Ramil, 51 Yellow Green Grass
53 Cave into
54 Low
56 Ironware
57 Mexican "Mister"
58 Mass energy
61 Bee hit
62 Art or technique

Sir Robert H. Wolfe
Hanin Bassalamah, KY

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are often serious-thinking and reserved. You may come across as unfriendly and have abrasiveness. Many of you are writers. You are sensitive to the feelings of others. However, because you are so sensitive to your surroundings, you make your private and isolation. Something you've been involved with for the past many years will end. Be ready to add this year.

Birthdays of: Abraham Lincoln, author Marcel Proust, novelist Anita Brookner, singer

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Even though you might feel a bit tired and restless today, exercise your energetic adventure. This makes you more open to others' opinions, which can help you to get a lot of work done. Don't.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Gather your resources today. You're aware of the work that needs to be done, and it can be quite overwhelming. Today, this just goes with the territory.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Hope is extremely important to you today. You're not particularly feeling that way, however. It may be up to others to help you get your attention to work.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You're in for a slow and frustrating day. Your patience with someone, possibly a relative or neighbor, will run out. Be careful not to let these circumstances bring you.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You refuse to waste money and don't plan on doing so today. It's the hanging over head against the wall. Don't worry—this is just a temporary.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): It's time to be angry with others, because they seem to be taking advantage of you. Don't give in to this impulse. You'll regret later. Remember, good manners.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Be careful who you trust today, as someone could be working against your best interests. Pay your cards very close to your chest.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You're in for an interesting day. You get many opportunities to get involved with new people today so don't be afraid to make yourself known. Go along with what is happening and see what develops.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Your first impulse is going to be to get angry at those around you, but you're bound to waste a lot of time. Why not go for a walk or get some physical exercise? You'll feel better (without).

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Don't be surprised if you're feeling a bit out of touch with others today. You definitely do, and you're not going to get very far with anyone if you're not careful. Don't.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Disputes with others are likely today. If you can't follow the advice, it's no use. Be kind and considerate.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You're in for a very fun day. Be especially careful with partners and close associates—you could make the right mistake or follow through to defend your side. Although, this is a good day.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU

Conceptis SudoKu

By Dave Green

			4	9	5	2		
		8				3	7	
	3		5				1	
	9			2			8	
	7				1		5	
	5	9				4		
		2	6	7	9			

Difficulty Level ★★★

HOW TO PLAY SUDOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

8	2	1	6	9	7	3	5	4
5	9	7	4	3	1	2	6	8
6	4	3	5	8	2	9	7	1
1	8	5	9	7	3	4	2	6
9	7	2	8	4	5	1	3	6
3	6	4	1	2	6	7	3	5
2	1	8	3	5	4	6	9	7
4	3	9	7	6	8	5	1	2
7	5	6	2	1	9	6	4	3

★★★

©2018 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Where to get great prime Angus...

DISCOVERY Baker Chef Daniel Pardo de Ayala

CAMLO and Toni Castillo

reservations, call Harmony Suites at 6839222.)

Mini tier and cupcake-dessert buffet

Then, there is a lawyer-turned-baker, Toni Castillo. I came across her cake when bayarin correspondent Bianca Gonzaga featured her cupcake tower.

Remembering so pretty is difficult to forget. Those photographs stayed imprinted in memory; it was only a matter of time before I gave her a call. On July 2, I did.

I ordered a birthday cupcake tower Castillo is now known for. She sells them at affordable rates so that many weddings are shifting from classic cakes to cupcake towers.

Trying to figure out what I wanted for my dessert, the salesgirl sent to look at the photos on her website: www.flickr.com/photos/pastrypoodle/. We came up with what I wanted, she set it up for me and I was pleased.

Her mini tier cakes are so pretty! Three-layer mini cakes with a base of six inches, seven of two- and a top of one-inch diameter, are so cutesy that looking at them is down joy.

For the amount of work she does, I think it's a steal at P1,500 a piece or P4,000 for three, each custom-made according to your specifications.

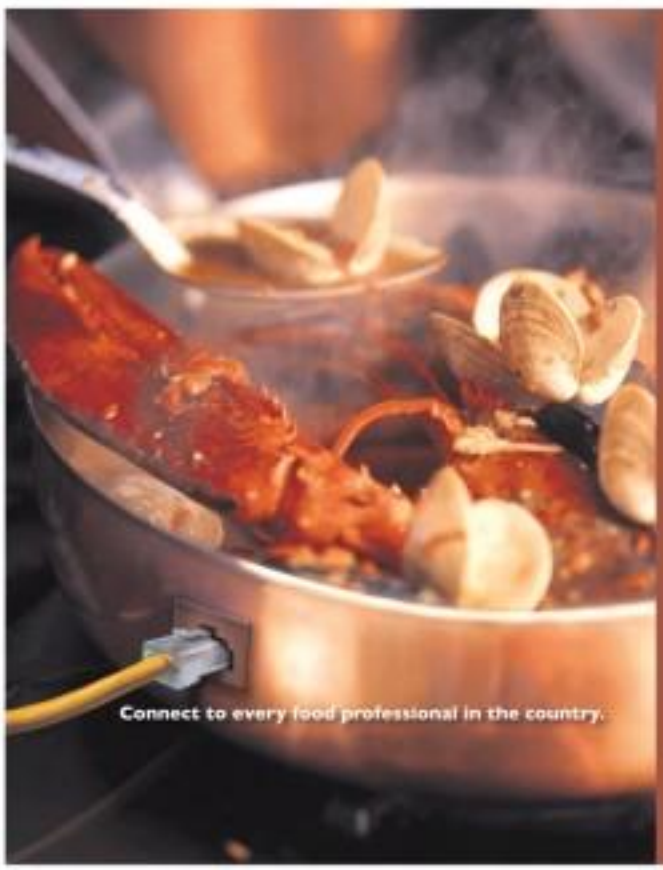
Another new twist from Piece of Cake (Toni's cake company) is the 20-flavor cupcake buffet with mini cakes and fresh flowers scattered on the table. How could you go wrong with all those flavors? There is something for everyone. Leftovers are nicely packed in boxes.

Now if you want just one yummy cupcake, you can put an order for any of the 20 flavors. Among my personal favorites are Rum-Soaked Figs and Walnut Cupcakes with Salted Caramel Buttercream, Blueberry and White Chocolate, Vanilla and Strawberry buttercream, Blue Cheese and Nuts, Cocoa, Brown Sugar and Banana and Oats Blondie with White Chocolate Buttercream, but only if you love Chad!

For someone who never thought she'd be selling her cakes, this lawyer-cake mommy is looking to relieve stress, is now stressed over baking? But I reckon the stress to be of the happy sort. Camille says, "I am thrilled. (Also) I could finally bake to my heart's content. Baking is a business given me the best excuse to do what I love best—bake, bake, bake!" Bake on girl, bake on!

Connect: 8830294 or e-mail: yummyprincess@yahoo.com.

E-mail the author at cmpalma@inquirer.com.ph



PDI LIFESTYLE KITCHEN-TESTED RECIPE

Pineapple chicken

Give poultry dish a twist

By Marnie Clikaritsa
Contributor

AD SURELY TO YOUR chicken dish by cooking it with pineapple chunks and pineapple juice.

In this recipe, cubed chicken breasts acquire a sweet, tangy tropical flavor that's just slightly piquant. Carrots add color and rich nutrients.

D.I.Y. Kitchen Experiment

Pineapple chicken

2 tbsp cornstarch
2 tbsp flour
½ tsp salt
3 medium size chicken breasts, deboned and sliced into cubes
2 tbsp cooking oil
1 small onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, chopped
1 medium carrot, cubed
1 small can (1 cl) pineapple chunks, unstrained
¼ c pineapple juice
Salt and pepper, to taste
½ (c) stems green onions, snipped into small pieces

Mix cornstarch, flour and salt slightly brown. Toss chicken breasts in mixture and let stand for 10-15 minutes.

Heat cooking oil in a skillet and sauté onions and garlic for 2 minutes. Add chicken breasts and cook until slightly brown. Stir in carrots, pineapple chunks and pineapple juice and season to taste with salt and pepper. Bring to a boil.

Reduce heat and simmer until chicken is fully cooked and tender, about 10 to 20 minutes. Sprinkle green onions on top and serve immediately.

Cook's tips

- Korean sauces is an Indonesian sauce which is thicker and sweeter than soy sauce. It's sold in bottles and is available in specialty shops and Oriental food section of large supermarkets like Metro in Market! Market!
- Keep the skin of the chicken breasts as this adds flavor to the dish.
- You can also use chicken thighs instead of chicken breasts.

A taste of Puerto Princesa's corn 'suman,' oily fish barbecue

Old haunts, new finds in this city within the forest

AS WE LANDED AT Puerto Princesa airport, I remembered my first visit to this capital of Palawan years ago to do research for a food book.

At 6 a.m., the place was still dark. Since it was my first time, I called the hotel and asked to be taken from the airport. I hadn't even settled down in the service vehicle when we were invited toward the Badjaw Inn, a side that must have taken all of three minutes.

But forward is today and the side is the legend: food wasn't just about food it wasn't that long ago.

The place is bustling, very different from the quiet town I remembered. I looked for the landmarks I recalled. No, Culture Shock isn't there anymore, that little store with the name that made me smile every time we passed it. But the Badjaw Inn is still there. And so with Ka Lui's restaurant, sandwiched by so many other businesses when it used to stand by itself.

There's nothing easy, regrettably, something to be expected with progress, and the snapshots are still very much around.

Oil dripping

I thought I would have time to visit the old haunts. I wanted to go to the market to see if the ingredients I saw before were still there...the big crabs and fish called "barbecue" because it was so far that when grilled, the oil dripping would ignite the charcoal. I wanted to buy the unmistakable suman corn.

But this was a vacation with my family so I was on a different mode. It was easy and cool we were to look for. The little sun we experienced (it was when Typhoon Frank slashed through the country) gave me a harmless sunburn.

I had to choose between Hidden Bay and the underground river. Since I'm not particularly fond of caves I chose to explore the islands and rivers.

My son and I missed the most awesome place offered in the country. The foreigners with him, billfish players who joined the 18-hull tournament in the city, thought so, too, and said it was worth the long trip were bumps a day. They all voted for the underground river in the website which asked to vote for the New Wonders of the World.

At Honda Island, so called because of its long white sand bar, we camped for a swim and lunch. The packed lunch—boiled eggs and pork adobo—lunch from the hotel was overshadowed by the fresh seafood offered and cooked on site.

Imagine crabs, squid and fish just brought in from the sea, and a juice bar that gave you fresh buko chopped open only when you order.

Longest grill

There was a big to-do when we were there. The provincial government wanted Palawan to be included in the Guinness Book of World Records with the longest grill: they could muster, proceeded to be 3 km of charcoal.

Well, it rained and you could imagine that grilling would be impossible. But the participants were there waiting with happy faces (about to be regrouped) there.

The only place I was able to revisit was Ka Lui's Restaurant. Ka Lui was one of my sources on my first visit there. He led me inside and I saw guests still had to leave their shoes at the entrance. His place had become a lot bigger and it still had the same ambience—native, clean with a lot of artwork.

He has a menu extensive with a wide array of mostly seafood. We had among so many others, grilled squid, tanguigue (Indian mackerel) and Ka Lui sent out cooked in coconut milk for me to taste.

Kinabuch was recommended and owned Dutch Chan married the Iberian-looking man spoke Tagalog like a native. And he is. Although he had an American father and a white Russian mother, Chan was born, grew up and studied in Manila.

The restaurant name is like an answer to someone's question about where you are going. The local wanting hole is a love garden, only open at night with a billiard hall and serving Filipino cooking.

Breakfast was included in our hotel package and every morning was a pleasant experience because Filipino food was part of the menu. And there were even dipping sauces (sauce-savers) included for the longest (sliced fish) and longaniza.

The only bad experience was going to Badjaw near the mangrove. It was beautifully situated but we never even got in order because no one moved to clear the table even if we asked.

The manager to tell his waiters who all wouldn't cope with the crowd of customers. Service, obviously, was more deserted.

Thankfully, Balsa, another restaurant away from the main roads saved us from going hungry. The restaurant is a huge sign but amid a garden.

It had an excellent grilled basket of many seafood and vegetables, a good order if you don't want to think or peruse through the menu. The restaurant is named after the local sparrow whose nest created by its saliva is one of the expensive ingredients that can be obtained from the limestone cliffs of Palawan by trained climbers.

I hope it doesn't take as long (more than 10 years) for me to visit this city within a frame again.

KA LUI at the entrance to his restaurant

DUTCH Chan of Kinabuch

PARTICIPANTS at the relaxed out Longest Grill

LJC's resto-tribute to mom holds formal opening

KORINA Sanchez

AGOT Isidro

LJC PRESIDENT Lorna Ambos, business partner Patricia Bravo, Gov. Mar Reese, Imelda Marcos, George del Rosario and Ernest Escaler

THE LJC GROUP OF RESTAURANTS formally opened Poly J, its newest theme restaurant, on the second floor of Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati.

It is dedicated to the memory of Felicidad de Arma-Cruz, mother of the late restaurateur Larry J. Cruz, and is considered a complement that...the restaurant that honors his father, the artist-writer Emilio Aguilar Cruz.

While the cuts of the menu at Poly J in Xiguanguan, it uses recipes of Filipino and Asian dishes cultivated by Poly J during her travels. The recipes are innovative since she did not hesitate to tweak them to suit her taste.

The Poly J opening was graced by former First Lady Imelda R. Marcos, who cut the ribbon, Sen. Mar Roxas, former Sen. Francisco "Kit" Tatad and broadcast celeb Korina Sanchez.

Guests were entertained by the PGH Manila Kawayan, which performed folk songs and OPM numbers with bamboo instruments.

Dancers from the Alay-Alon, a dance troupe by Ligaya Amil, performed a pangalay to bring good luck to the restaurant.

Poly J was the last restaurant Larry conceptualized and supervised before he died in his desk last February.

Even before its formal opening, it was already enjoying brisk business.

Some of the must-try dishes include Poly J's Pumpkin Curry (fresh fried crab served on a mound of jasmine rice topped with golden fried garlic in olive oil); Lola Icing's Adobo (dry and crispy pork adobo served with lots of garlic, prepared to be Poly J's answer to long life); Poly J's Dilis-tinta Rice (kamay-kain dilis with sweet pineapple topped on steamed jasmine rice); Filipin With Sweet Plum Sauce; and Poly Jim (Poly J's peach with chopped heart of palm (ubod), fruit cocktail and fruit juices), available in either Passion Fruit, Mango Delight and Ramos Crush flavors.

Call 7289978 and 7289858.

ALUH-ALON Dancers

PUP BAND at Kawayan

STEAMED Australian Sea Bass with Dockers Caviar Sauce

PAN-FRIED Duck Foie Gras with Olives

STRAWBERRY Soup with Whole Milk Ice Cream

A MUSE Risotto of Wild Mushroom and Goat Cheese

Michelin-rated menu comes to Manila

By Anna C. Solmerano
Contributor

British chef Paul Anthony Quarchioni recreates the menus of the world's top chefs

THE PROSPECT OF dining on food inspired by culinary luminaries led food lovers to the tables of the Tivoli at the Manchurie Oriental.

The multi-awarded restaurant was the setting for British Paul Anthony Quarchioni to showcase the food of some of the world's celebrated chefs.

Over the last 21 years, Quarchioni has honed his skills in establishments in England and France which have garnered the coveted twenty-distinction or six-coveted twenty-distinction or six-coveted twenty-distinction or six-

CHEFS COOK FOR THEIR SIGNIFICANT OTHER (Digital Innovation)

Dino's Osso Buco and Trio Of Scallops

By Vergie Bugo-Reyes

"IF I PREPARE FOOD for my special someone, I let the food do the talking," says Dino Guingona, noted chef-instructor of the Academy for International Culinary Arts (Asia).

The lobsters are blanched and cooked in coconut milk with white wine and mixed with plenty of coriander for that extra tasty taste. They're served with seafood bouillabaisse and fish pesa. That alone should prove how special his date is.

If possible, he will do gourmet dishes.

"Women are always amazed with gourmet food. Everyone likes it," he said. "Well, that's my test. That's what I do."

Guingona, who has been with Asia for two years, is a product of the California Culinary Institute in San Francisco, CA. He apprenticed at Nito Culhoni Florentine in San Francisco and worked as chef de partie in some of the top hotels in the US.

When he came home in 1995, he began a business supplying hotels with fresh imported produce. Then, he started a catering business, Epicurean Kitchen, in 1999 which still runs well to this day. He says do something for a couple or for as many as 50. He himself succeeds in every detail.

In 2000, he flew to Chiang Mai, Thailand to study royal Thai cuisine.

He became a culinary instructor by accident. He was on his way back to QB when he bumped into Mike Tiongco, MCB owner, and he offered him to join the group.

"I immediately said yes," he recalls. "I didn't realize the invitation is on full time; it totally different field for me. There, it's not so much how much someone can pay you; you receive. It's the sense of fulfillment. I've seen students who are scared of sharp objects and then in two days time up and they turns I see their progress and the great joy in it. I've also landed on resort. For me, that's one hell of a reward that cannot be bought."

DINO Guingona, Asia's chief instructor

OSSO Buco

TRIO of Scallops: Grilled Lemongrass Scallops, Scallop Ceviche and Pan-seared Scallops with Tree Cavlaro

Balanced meal

In doing a dinner for his 90 (eighteen over), Guingona, of course, considers her personality. He knows no more untrained. If she's a vegetarian, he does all veggie food. Or, he does a complete, balanced meal.

"Whenever I compose a menu for her I balance things off," said Guingona, who's also Asia's ostensible and alcohol director. "There has to be starch, vegetables, protein (beef, fish or chicken) and dessert. If your main dish is already heavy, either beef or pork, you need something light to start with like a salad and something light to end the meal like fruits."

For example, a filling Osso Buco he pairs off with the refreshingly light trio of Scallops.

Perfect for an appetizer, the scallops are prepared in three different ways—grilled, braised and pan-seared—all to complete.

For the main course, the Osso Buco and there's the fish.

"Osso Buco is a great dish if you don't cook it," Guingona said. "You cook it slowly and let simmer until the flesh almost falls off its bone. It's cooked with high quality red wine."

To cap the meal, a very light dessert of marinated strawberries and mango will do the trick.

Osso Buco
3 pc veal or beef shank
½ c all purpose flour
3 strips bacon
2 tbsp olive oil
1 pc medium onion, diced
½ c leeks (white part, cut in to 1 inch bits)
½ medium carrot, diced
4 cloves garlic, minced
½ tsp fresh thyme
2 tbsp tomato paste
½ c red wine (dry)
½ c chicken stock
3 tbsp gremolata (equal parts of garlic, lemon zest, finely minced parsley)
Salt and pepper to taste

Dice bacon strips and render fat; set bacon bits aside. Trim shanks and season with salt and pepper. Dredge in flour and shake off excess. Brown shank evenly on bacon fat and set aside. In the same pan, add olive oil, sauté onions until translucent. Add leeks and carrots and deglaze with red wine. Return shanks to pan and reduce wine until almost syrupy in consistency. Add stock and bring to a boil. Simmer. Add tomato paste and fresh thyme and simmer until tender.

Pan-seared Scallops with Tree Caviars
4 pc sea scallops
1 c heavy cream
1 tbsp caviar sauce
1 pc shallot, finely minced
½ c white wine
½ c fish stock
½ tsp red and black lumpfish roe (caviar)
1 pc fried basil (garnish)

Sear scallops until brown; pan frame on both sides. In the same pan, sauté shallots. Deglaze with white wine. Reduce until a second. Add cream and reduce until thick. Strain then add caviar sauce. Assemble.

Scallop Ceviche
4 pc sea scallops
1 ½ g fresh coriander
10 g cilantro coriander
1 pc large shallot, finely diced
3 g ginger, grated
1 pc fresh chili, seeded, minced
2 tbsp Thai fish sauce
3 tbsp lime juice
Salt, pepper and sugar to taste

Blanch scallops in boiling fish, stock for 20 seconds. Set scallops dry and slice horizontally. Prepare sea ingredients separately. Chill scallops and marinate (at least five minutes in lemon). When ready to serve, toss all ingredients together until well coated.

Grilled Lemongrass Scallop
4 pc sea scallops
2 pc lemongrass stalks
1 pc lemongrass. Finely minced
½ tsp coriander powder
½ tsp cumin powder
3 tbsp olive oil
A pinch of cayenne
Salt and pepper to taste

Marinate scallops with lemongrass and spice rub for approximately 20 minutes. Skewer scallops and grill two minutes per side.

Popular Angeles resto does homemade sausages

STARTING JULY 15, CYBELINE Dining in Angeles City offers homemade fresh sausages in dishes like classic garlic and marjoram sausage served with roast potato and tapioc bread; said sausage presented on orchestra pesto in aromatic tomato sauce; Chorizo Sisig or at 12+2 like Asado Rib - Clarkview Rotisserie, Angeles City. Call (045) 8924059/ 09189440059/ 0929-5078866, fax (045) 8926201; e-mail chris.lachin@datamining.com

Taste of Thai

A spread of Thai cuisine is featured at Makati Shangri-La's Circle Grand Cafe until July 21. Savour Spicy Prawn Soup with Lemongrass Broth, Steamed Sea Bass with chili, lime and garlic and Roast Duck Curry. Call 8400984/8136888 local 1588/ 7588.

Singapore's street food

This month, Makati Shangri-La Manila's Pavilion offers the signature street food of Singapore. Feast on the exotic flavours of Soha Serving Street Bean Curd with Bean & Spicy Peanut Sauce; Achar (Sweet Mango Pickle); Bak John (Minced Stuffed Dumpling Baguette Sandwich), Hainanese Chicken Rice, Bibo Peng (Bibb Ice Blend with Vanilla Ice Cream), Kopi-C (Coffee with Evaporated Milk), Teh Tarik (Pulled Tea with Condensed Milk), and Teh Ais (Ginger Milk Tea). The hotel's Patisserie Jeanne Ginger up with Praline of the Month, Mango Ginger. It also offers a wine of your choice with the German Chocolate Cake, its Cake of the Month. Call (02)8120123.

"Steak-ciety" concoctions

San Miguel Café, the full-service restaurant of San Miguel Corporation located along EC Francis St. in Ortigas, features special steaks cooked up by the San Miguel Foodworks Culinary Center using high-quality Montalvo meats. This lineup of limited edition offerings now make up San Miguel Café's Chef's Daily Specials. Featured every Monday is the New York Steak with Red Wine Gravy. Every Tuesday, the Monterey's Pork Steak with Apple-Gruyère sauce. On Wednesday, it's Bistek Steak à la Pobre. Thursdays are devoted to Bistek Lomo with Style Lomo with Capers and Anchovy sauce. And Sinigang Beef ending to the busy work week: Monterey Rib-Eye Steak with Black Peppercorn's Gravy.

Cowboy ribs and steaks

Get a taste of the Wild West as Texas Roadhouse Grill adds new dishes to its menu. Indulge in Cowboy Ribs and Steaks plus New York's Junior's Original Cheesecake and Grape Shake. Cowboy ribs like Beef Short Ribs and steaks such as Flat Iron Steak will be available beginning July 14. Texas Roadhouse Grills is at Bonifacio High Street (tel. 856-5471 and El Pueblo, Ortigas (636-0161).

Guilt-free goodies

Bons Coffee in Greenbelt 3 Center offers baked treats and pastries like Blueberry Muffins with Lemon, Pistachio Orange Scones, Mini Round Blackcurrant Muffins, Great Canadian Bran Muffins, Zucchini Pineapple Muffins, Sour Cream Coffee Cake, Indulge in Nibbles Fresh Beef Sandwich, Mini Schmidt Egg Salad Sandwich, Nutella Belly Sandwich, Spanish Sardine and Onion, Turkey Jerk and Peanut Butter Banana Almond, Ninongski Center is located at Pilarity (Filipino) Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City. Call 8820018 for more info or 8820019 for making reservations.

Heavenly treats

Heaven 'n Eggs proffers dozen big plates, pastas, sandwiches, French toasts, soups, specialties, waffles, steaks, lunch and dinner baskets, omelets and scrambles, salads, soup, appetizers and dessert's. Heaven 'N Eggs is located at C&B Building, Forbes Mayflo, Diosdado Cabg (2870874), 1271 Commerce Ave (8570182), Fuente Osmeña, Cebu City ((032) 2512172), and Tektong Mall North Triangle, Quezon City (9803888).

Cowboy ribs and steaks

Get a taste of the Wild West as Texas Roadhouse Grill adds new dishes to its menu. Indulge in Cowboy Ribs and Steaks plus New York's Junior's Original Cheesecake and Grape Shake. Cowboy ribs like Beef Short Ribs and steaks such as Flat Iron Steak will be available beginning July 14. Texas Roadhouse Grill is at Bonifacio High Street (tel. 856-5471 and El Pueblo, Ortigas (636-0161).

DELECTABLE SPANISH ADOBO

The popular adobo is mastered to perfection by Bustillo's Restaurant. Garlic lovers will have a scintillating experience once a drop of Spanish Adobo hits the palate. A number of spices not unfamiliar to the taste are enhanced, bringing back a whiff of your childhood you spooned as a time. Bustillo's Restaurant is at level 111 Forbes Town Center Road Drive, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. Call 8562751.

Red Ribbon's Mamon:

Truly a Must-Try!

Red Ribbon brings delight to your every day with its delicious line of breads and pastries. From the classic Ensaymada and Cinnamon Rolls that everyone has come to love, to the distinctly delicious Banana Crunch, Red Ribbon has given Filipinos superb breads and pastries that the whole family loves.

Red Ribbon invites everyone to discover its line of great-tasting Breads and Pastries, perfect for those everyday sweet moments. Red Ribbon Mamon, a "Must-Try" this July. Distinctly soft, golden cream-like chiffon made with just the right heavenly sweetness and moisture that delicately melts in your mouth. There's happiness in every bite!

Red Ribbon breads and pastries are ideal for gifting, baon or merienda, or even just a gesture of sweetness. Perfect to be enjoyed with family and friends, visit the nearest Red Ribbon store or call 8-77-77 for Metro Manila delivery. Whatever the occasion may be, it's more beautiful with a Red Ribbon.

Red Ribbon
Mamon

MANILA BAY BOODLE FEAST

Bluebeard's Seafood Island offers Manila Bay Boodle Feast of Baron Oysters Primero, Baked au Alfonso in Pesto, Cebu Prawn, Jumbo Hito N'Ito, Pinapaitan na Tilapia, Pancit Gulat, Seafood Noodles, Seafood Island Chicken, Jamaican Spicy Wings, Spicy Crispy Tadyang and Strawberry Sangria. The menu also includes Pica-Pica, Soups & Salads, Hot Plates (Isda Ang/ sweet and sour), Kinilaw, Seafood to Fisherman's Sour Broth, Crabs a la Carte, Crabs by the Basket, Fresh Visayan Alaw Crabs / California Crabs, Oysters & Clams, Barbecue & Deep Fried Tripplings, Seafood Rice. Call 8120780, 8867402/ 9112484. Bluebeard's Seafood Island is at Seafood City Libis, Fiesta Market Market!, Port Bonifacio Global City and Shopwise Arcade, Araneta Center, Cubao.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Bernie G. Velarde

FOCUS ON MUSIC

- **Moymoy Palaboy new YouTube sensation** /D4
- **Ariel Rivera records with Aussie artist** /D4

DELIVERY HOTLINE 77-777 If it's late, It's FREE!

ACTOR Rupinosa says his costume-along video depicts child labor in the region.

Baguio youth in fest's top 5

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—A 15-YEAR-OLD RESIDENT of Saint Louis University landed in the top five of the First Stranger Festival in Novaesparkdrink, Amsterdam, a world video art event for children's rights held July 1 to 5.

Erik Rafinosa was the only Filipino nominated to the festival by the United Nations International Children's Fund (Unicef). He produced the one-minute feature, "Beside of Freedom," about a man who can't make his air conditioner work. Unexpected, he counts the machine open, to find an emaciated child inside.

The man replaces the child with a swapping youth, and the machine works again.

Rafinosa submitted his entry online to the European Cultural Foundation (ECF), according to Helen Tibolds, Goodbiss director of the Philippine Information Agency.

Crisis

Rafinosa, who flew to the Netherlands for the festival, works with the government's Kalinaw Siwa Network (KSN).

In a written essay sent to the festival organizers, Rafinosa said the minute-long video that he shot with a friend, Guillermo Ocampo, depicts the region's child labor crisis.

The grand prize went to the Russian entry. The four other finalists were not ranked.

Mega matron of honor

Any role is fine, she says, in forthcoming Judai-Ryan wedding

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Manuel Dayrit

PALS Ryan, Sharon and Judai at this PBB2.

MANILA—"SOMEONE TOLD ME I WAS the friends Sharon Cuneta, Judy Ann Santos and Ryan Agoncillo described their stay in the French capital during the 6th Paris Cinema International Film Festival.

Last month, when they met up in London—where the Sharon movie "Caregiver" premiered—the engaged couple reportedly asked her to be matron of honor in their forthcoming wedding (date is yet to be finalized, said Judai).

Sharon told Inquirer Entertainment she knew all along that Ryan would pop the big question on Judai's birthday last May 11.

Although she is personally asked to be wearing (principal sponsor) in those big weddings, Sharon, also known as Mega (for megastar), said she'd gladly be matron of honor in Ryan and Judai because she regards the bride-to-be as a kid sister, even referring to Judai as "bunsoy ang."

Judai started calling Sharon "ate," or big sister, when they made their 2002 movie "Magkapatid."

At the little-do, the engaged couple turned up during the screening of "Caregiver," directed by Chito Roño, at the MK1 Bibliotheque on Friday night. It was the main feature of the Philippine program's gala night. Sharon was thrilled.

In show her appreciation for the gesture, she wore the same evening to the screening of Judai's latest movie, "Pisang," directed by Cesar Montano. Garcia, held at the Solaire Theater in Chanyin Elyssion.

A total of 47 Filipino movies were showcased at the festival, concluding July 13. Cinemalaya winner "Blue" is in competition.

E-mail: bayanisandiego@hotmail.com

7TH 'SUPERHERO ACTION' DAY!

Stop losing your hair. Regain your confidence!

For most women losing hair is like losing vibrancy, self-confidence and self-esteem. And she could lead to depression, anxiety and feelings of inferiority. Stop losing your hair. If there are women like Interior Designer Tessa Prieto-Valdes and Designer Eva Abesamis who fought and triumphed against hairloss — you can, too. Discover their secret.

Excessive stress, genes or too much extreme styling methods could cause women's hairloss. To stop falling and thinning, one needs the right treatments. In the Philippines, there's only one hairloss center where advanced treatments and highly trained trichologists are found: **Svenson.**

Tessa Feught thinning hair as soon as she experienced its early signs. "Thinning hair makes a woman look older. I didn't want that to happen to me. When I noticed lots of hair on my pillow and my hair started to thin out, I immediately bought 'thickening' shampoos. But I was disappointed. They didn't stop my problem. Good thing I discovered Svenson. After a course of treatments, my hair regained its original volume. It's even softer, more lustrous. I could style it any way I want it!"

Tessa Feught

Eva Abesamis

Eva, on the other hand, wanted best results for her hair. "I didn't want to use other products. I just wanted the best. When a friend recommended Svenson, I decided to give it a try. I had no more falling hair. It's back to its lush, shiny, stunning look. I knew I made the right decision. Thanks to Svenson!"

Stop falling and thinning hair.
Call Svenson at **892-HAIR (4247)** or **234-6892** (Cebu) today for a **FREE** consultation.
You can be assured that all consultations are carried out in private.

Have you ever called in sick when you really weren't?

Someone out there knows the truth...

Find out on page 03...

Maybe a book next, Lea?

FEEDBACK

From: Ritchie Santiago (santiago.ritchie.g@rdmed.chi.gov.ae), MidDestin-Australia:

Well dear, Lea—you've certainly not just a pretty face but a person of many talents.

***

From: Mr and Dr Sayson (sg.sayson@yahoo.com):

Congratulations! I'm sure you'll be a great columnist and—who knows!— maybe a book author next.

***

From: Benny Chan (bbbale_bonny@yahoo.com.au), Australia:

There's always a welcome friend for the readers like me, Lea! Specially for Filipinos overseas who are involved in community theater groups. We await every Backstory with great anticipation!

***

From: Ernie Cruz (ebrownie@yahoo.com) San Fernando City:

I want to thank PDI for having Lea as an entertainment columnist. May I ask her please to "backstory" her "music" experience?

***

From: Maria Isabel Mariano (mariaisabelmariano@gmail.com):

I have been a Lea Salonga fan since she was 10. She has always impressed me with her talents, and also with the way she speaks about life and love. I am also happy that she is Dad-fearing and proud to be a Filipina. More power to you, Lea!

***

From: Lizzie Sauvaidal (lizzielizz007@yahoo.com):

Congratulations to Isabelle for coming to Manila for her concert. Also, having Lea Salonga as a weekly columnist!

Hi, Lea! I am from Washington and I am so happy that you have agreed to this new way of entertaining your millions of fans. It's good to know that we can look forward every week to a sensible and inspiring article from a very intelligent person.

I have two daughters, ages 7 and 4, who simply adore you. They dream of being acting like you someday. I have been enrolling them in theater workshops.

Can you write about yourself as a wife and mother?

Pls tell Avanish "Tzadeville" on Aug. 9 at 7 p.m. My daughters are very excited. I have chosen the best seats, and we hope to have a chance to have a snapshot with you.

The *birit* is here to stay, for better or worse

THERE HAVE BEEN ENOUGH COLUMNS and write-ups bemoaning the seeming pervasiveness of the singing style commonly known as "birit."

For those who don't know exactly what the word means, it's the style that requires the voice (thyroid strength) than is lot of others due to the stratospheric heights that a singer's voice must reach.

Local singers known for performing in this style are Regine Velasquez (although I have to give her props for exploring the quieter, more soothing aspects of her range), Sarah Geronimo, and Isabelle dela Cruz.

Levi Sulonga

I don't really see the "birit" going anywhere to the point that it'll no longer exist. Really, there is room for any style, for as long as there is an audience that demands it.

Maybe that's where the problem lies... the demand for this type of vocal calisthenics is such that it diminishes those for other styles of singing. Back in the 1970s and '80s, the top-tier talents included the likes of Celeste Legaspi, Rak Ledesma, Leah Navarro, Sharon Cuneta, Jose Mari Chan, and others whose brand of singing was very straightforward and revolved the lyrics as much as the melody. I distinctly remember listening to silent songs on my way to school, and feeling soothed.

However, things seem to have changed... and they've changed enough for people to cry out, "Enough!"

As an art form, singing isn't just about high notes; it's also about appropriate rendition and telling a story

Truth be told, I sometimes envy the (for lack of more appropriate nomenclature) "biritter" pipes of steel, the heights that their voices can reach, and the physical stamina that their efforts require. In the shower I have made attempts (self-limiting efforts are to say) to reach those heights but, at the end of the day, I tell myself that I should stick to what my vocal chords can do.

That's not a bad thing to remember for all singers. Each instrument has been created uniquely, and to force oneself into what may be an ill-fitting mold cannot possibly benefit the vocalist. A burgeoning talent's followers should not try to be a Celine Dion, unless the hair + mouth wide (for her vocal chords, that is).

One can't vocally muscle one's way to success. Singing as an art form itself just about the high notes; it is also about intonation, emotional entertainment, and informed and appropriate interpretation. It's about respecting the melody and lyrics as they were written, and not twisting them to performance. It's about telling a story and connecting with the audience, moving them with what you're trying to say, not just with how it's being said.

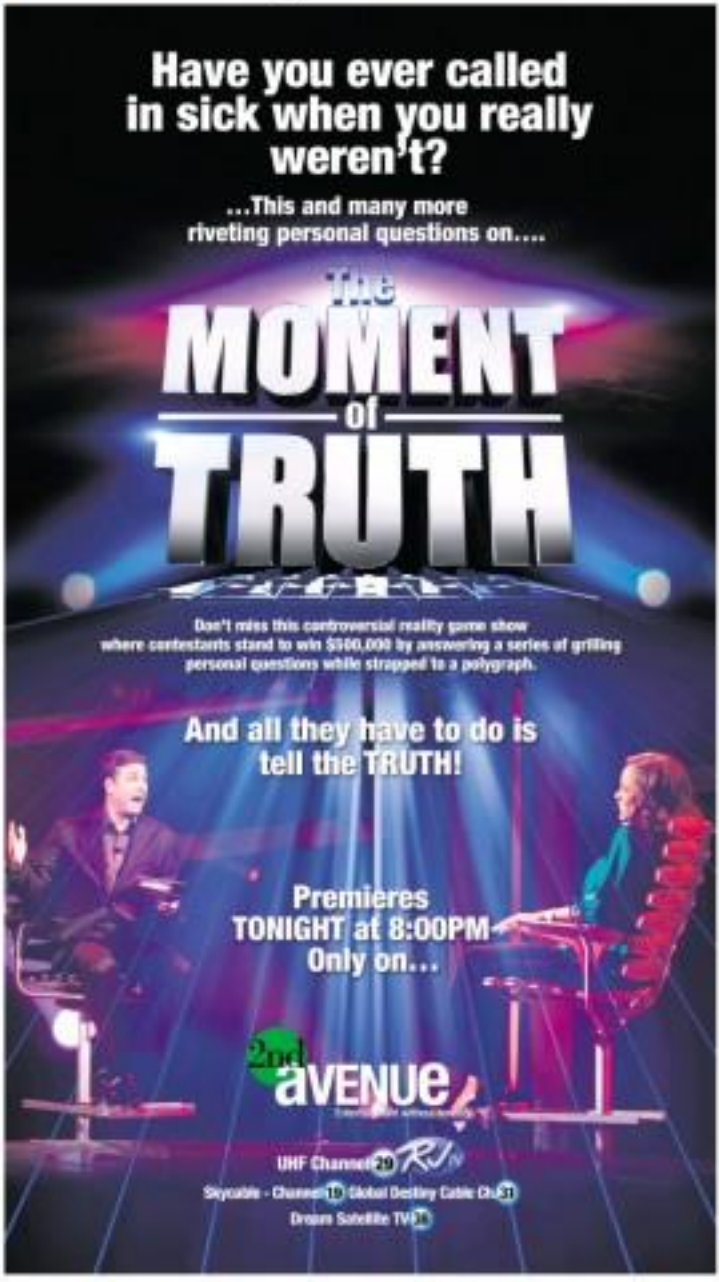
So yes, there is a place for high notes, and for those who are experts at delivering the goods. That said, there is also plenty of room for the rest, whose more pedestrian talents and messages will hopefully be appreciated and cherished as well.

At least, I'd like to think so, maybe for my own selfish sake.

Shameless plug

Please count me Cinderella at the CCP Main Theater, from July 29 to Aug. 24. A presentation of Broadway Asia Entertainment, directed by Bobby Garcia, it features a set design by Tony Award-winning David Gallo, costumes by Renato Balboteo, music direction by Michael Duff and choreography by Noel Ross. A stellar cast (for future!) are too! I has been assembled, with actor-singer-dancers coming from the US, Australia and, of course, the Philippines. Bring your kids, bring your parents! It'll be one magical, marvelous, wonderful time! Tickets are available at Ticketworld, 891-9999 or at www.ticketworld.com.

By the way a cast album will be recorded very soon, and will hopefully be available from the very first performance night.



Music Industry News

Rico B bumps into his past

IT'S A SMALL WORLD, after all, for Vice Blanco and his former band mates. The record label he signed up with as a solo artist, Monster Music Philippines, happens to have those mates, too, in its roster.

Blanco, currently recording his debut album at Studio in Pasig, has also joined the following updates on his Multiply website, announcing a band whose vocalist and bassist were originally part of his old band.

That having a bit of difficulty those days booking studio time, which seems to be all over a little longer for the album. Lots of other artists (such as Sandwich, MYMP) dropped by the studio with us, which is very good for the music scene. Loads of great albums to look forward to this year! I'm getting somewhat impatient though, as I've been laying in tracks the drums, vocals and more playing live. So far I've had about basic tracks and roughly mixed the bulk of the album, so we should take just a couple more weeks, barring any more studio schedule glitches. Thank you for your patience."

In the meantime, fans have been raving about the pre-album release of the single "Pop-ta," Blanco's distinctly arranged song about love and deception that rings with across-type genre rules and a quirky Indian bass prelude. The single is exclusively available via digital downloads. And, for details, text RI-COBLANCO to 2366.

Platinum pot

Sony BMG Filipinas happily reports that several of its local and foreign artists have been selling well, with the following CDs having high marks: Aeril Lungree's "Best Things Thing" (platinum); Innocent's "I Do" (double platinum); Leona Lewis' "Spirit" (gold); Sharon Cuneta's "Isn't It Romantic Vol. 2" (five times platinum); Lea Salonga's "Inspired" (platinum); and Callalily's "Instrumental ECP" (platinum).

Last year, the 30-member Philippine translation of the Recoil Industry (IFPI) unanimously approved a board resolutions lowering the certified standards for gold and platinum albums due to declining sales.

Local albums only have to sell 12,500 copies (from 15,000) to achieve gold status, and 25,000 (from 30,000) to go platinum. Foreign albums are now even. Sell gold with sales of 7,500 copies (from 10,000) and platinum with sales of 15,000 copies (from 20,000).

Rare appearance

The 2000s pop singing trio Tongpo Brothers, said to be "the first Pinoy artist to perform at the Sydney Opera House," made a rare appearance in a recent show at Illuminations in Greenhills, Manila.

The event was a prelude to the Global Filipino Games international conference held in Makati.

Passion for music

The third annual success rehearsal of the Music Masters Series is Hong Kong resident duo young people in India, Vietnam, Thailand and the Philippines from the highest passion for music they would have or it every summer of the day if they could.

Commissioned by MTV Networks Asia and partnered with the market information company TNS, the Rehkmoff was conducted in March this year which encompassed 3,741 online interviews with urban individuals aged between 15-34 year-olds in China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam and Australia.

The study also found that mobile phones are commonly used for listening to music. One in four young Asians paid to download digital music recently while twice as many added to their music library subscription paying.

Coldplay rules

A Billboard report posted on the Yahoo website says that Coldplay's latest album, "Viva La Vida" (EMI) has sold more downloads than any album so

digital history. The old record was held by John Mayer's "Continuum" (Sony BMG).

"Viva La Vida" sold 66,000 downloads last week, bringing its total to 314,000. "Continuum" has sold 313,000 downloads since its release in September 2006. The rest of the all-time top five albums sold on the new paid digital downloads consist of Amy Winehouse's "Back To Black" (309,000), Daughtry's "Daughtry" (303,000) and Justin Timberlake's "FutureSex/LoveSounds" (283,000).

Top paid downloads

In other download news, "Love" by Flo Rida featuring T-Pain becomes the first song to top the 4-million mark in paid downloads. The paid digital download medium, scarcely existed five years ago and now it's the biggest growth area in the music business. Album sales in the first half of 2008 totaled 206.6 million. Digital track sales for the same period totaled 842.7 million, up substantially from 413.2 million.

The bad news is, just three albums topped 1 million copies in sales (CDs and digital downloads combined) in the first six months of 2008, the lowest total since Nielsen/SoundScan started in 1991. Three albums are: Lil' Wayne's "The Carter III" (1,326,000), Jack Johnson's "Sleep Through the Static" (1,249,000) and Mariah Carey's "E=MC2" (1,062,000).

The album sold 1 million copies in the first six months of 2007. And 16 albums hit the million-mark in the first half of 2006. Divisions posted in 2001 when a whopping 37 reached the million mark in the year's first 26 weeks.)

Email pottongcruz@inquirer.com.ph

PHOTO Bloom

Moymoy Palaboy, superstar

By Pochole Concepcion

THE LATEST YOUTUBE SENSATION is not a singer in the usual sense, but two Pinoy lip-synching siblings whose spontaneous antics have earned them fans worldwide, including Dave Grohl of the famous 1970s group, Chicago.

The recently made video clip that is Moymoy Palaboy debuted on the Internet in February 2007, quietly on a whim. "Tulp lang, gusto lang namin makita ano'ff nangyari sa YouTube," says James Ronald Ochoa, a.k.a. Moymoy.

Since then, it has a guesstimated a total of 7.12 million hits for 22 uploaded videos.

Shy boys, no!

At first, James had difficulty convincing Sheila, his younger brother, who was very shy then when Sudd finally said yes, deciding to mount a buddy trip to help his cheesy dancer groomed to be a rebuilding basketball wedding to explode.

Using a Sony Ericsson W810i cell phone with a 2-megapixel camera — and with Sudd editing the footage on an HP laptop — the first Moymoy Palaboy video, "I Spot's 'Dirty Pop," featured only James.

Response to the next video was phenomenal. "Brilliance unfolds" make the way the boys put a twist to lip-synching, a refreshing update on the art of theatrical spoof. Giving their words a natural, raw appeal was the fact that the video was shot in amateur surroundings, the cramped living room of their Pasay City apartment, with their aunt ("Mama Auntie") casually lip-synching in and out of the frame.

So far, the most-watched Moymoy video is the brothers' version of the Spice Girls' "Wannabe," currently with more than 2 million hits. The rest are not far behind, viewed by the hundreds of thousands. Both says they have upgraded from camera phone to a Nokia N73, and that he now edits on a new host laptop.

James says that there are currently 7,488 subscribers to Moymoy's YouTube account; there are the ones who spread the word, but who really are the guys behind Moymoy Palaboy?

James, who turns 23 on July 17, was the male lead routine in a cover band, Pantovisia, which regularly performs here and abroad. James has been to Japan and Malaysia with the band, which is due to leave next week for a visit in Singapore. He opted not to join this time around, because Moymoy Palaboy has just been offered new line gigs on cable and free TV.

Sudd, 21, describes himself as "coward, the introvert" who loves to play computer games and tinker with electronic gadgets.

WITH new pals French Lumoso of MTV Phil. (top) and Bilog of QMA 7. Duo has garnered 7.12 million views for 22 YouTube uploads.

The brothers went to the same public elementary and high schools in Pasay where they were born. For college, they attended the Polytechnic University of the Philippines. James, a Broadcasting major, dropped out to find a job and help his mother, who was stricken with breast cancer. (She died in 2006.) Sudd finished Affiliation Management course and now works as an in-house sales rep in PLDT.

Featured roots

Before becoming a band singer, James assumed it out as a fast food attendant. One day he auditioned for ABS-CBN's "Star in a Million" singing contest, running into Christian Bautista and asking him for directions. The song James sometimes how he fared sounds so funny in any Moymoy video: "Bongga ako sa 'yo, can't wait, let 3 saw also. *Phinilitan* ng kanta... nung tinatanong na ano ka... I, 2, higking kumalimot, 4 ngod. Hindi ako nanunog. Kailangan pala dun'y pag ka..."

James may look as ordinary as the neighborhood boasts in Pasay, but it's the head of his own cute. Moymoy Palaboy has created close to numerous celebrities, joining GMA 7's "Bahlikan Gang" where it reprises its gags in the segment, "Ice Tube." It is also set to have its own show segment on MTV Philippines.

GMA and MTV wanted Moymoy so bad, they both offered to be a talent management contract. The two guys yesterday are now Moymoy's management partners.

Invitations to guest on other TV stations have been turned down, the aim, to preserve the mystique and risk appeal of a music debut set whose real names are not heard.

The brothers are overwhelmed by the diversity of fans who regularly communicate with them on the Net. "Marunong lago Mexico, meron din sa Colombia, UK, US-lalo na sa California, sa Canada," says James.

Just last Saturday, he adds, an American member of the audience at Bedrock, where Pantovisia was playing, approached James and said his brother was a "big fan." He interviewed himself as John Green, and said his brother was Peter Cetera of the 1970s pop-rock group Chicago (who, it turned out, was also in town, incognito).

The Ochoa brothers have settled several commendations from because the fans have been engaging in discussions on the following social-networking sites: Multiply, Facebook, Myspace and Friendster. "Magkikita kami, but yun-through me ng Moymoy Palaboy, magkaibaan sa mga sites na yan," says Sudd.

How do they choose which song to spoof? "Sagarak sa mga," James replies. "At kung may gusto ng isa," Sudd adds. "Pang 'Love' at Sonata boy, request ng fans."

As Moymoy Palaboy breathes in 15-minute leads with fame, the brothers are nonchalant about the prospects of getting rich. "Kung may fame dun, ganun pa rin naman kami," Sudd says. "Kami eka," James quips, "nakakabuti'ye rin sa kanila."

Amy Pearson duets with Ariel Rivera

AUSTRALIAN SINGER-SONGWRITER Amy Pearson duets with Ariel Rivera in "Ready to Fly," the eleven single from Pearson's debut album "Who Am I" (Sony BMG).

The song is said to signal the return of Rivera, who has been on hiatus from the music scene and focusing on his acting career.

Pearson is reportedly a rising star in Australia. She was brought in the attention of record executives by Gary Barlow, front man of the UK boy band Take That.

"Hollywood Olympics"

Carlo Orosa and Oliver Oliveros, Philippine directors of the World Championships of Performing Arts (WCOPA), recently announced the country's official delegates to this year's "Hollywood Olympics," to be held at the Universal City Walk, Hollywood and Vibrate Amusement, Los Angeles on July 19 to 27.

The Philippines will be sending an "all-winners" team that will enter eight senior competitions (age 15 and below), and seven adult contestants (age 16 and above).

Junior contestants are Catherine Loria, Cherry Pabol, Glee Steve Gaddi, Rachel Sanoy, Shawk, Tavia, and Rubi Sison, and Tippy dos Santos.

AMY Pearson and Ariel Rivera

Senior contestants are CJ Concepcion, Dee de Rosa, Abe Bonaldo, King, Mae-lle Gaspar, Punky Tolentino, and Paolo Ledesma.

Alicia Keys in one-night Manila show

R&B/SOUL ARTIST ALICIA KEYS returns to Manila for a one-night concert on Aug. 5 at the SM Mall of Asia Complex.

Alicia Keys Live in Manila 2008" features songs from her latest studio album "As I Am," including upbeat melodies like "No One" and "Teenage Love Affair" and endearing ballads like "Superwoman" and "Prelude To A Kiss."

Known for her unique compositions, Keys has received numerous distinctions, including 11 Grammy Awards, 11 Billboard Music Awards, 3 American Music Awards and 14 NAACP Image Awards.

Keys began her musical career with her debut album "Songs in A Minor" which sold over 10 million copies worldwide. It featured the chart-topping single "Fallin'" and was awarded a record of five Grammy awards in a single night.

Call 891-9999.

Rick Astley at the Big Dome

Grammy awardee Rick Astley, known for his hit songs "Together Forever" and "Never Gonna Give You Up," performs at the Araneta Coliseum on Aug. 13.

Astley, a bouncy dance pop singer, also proved to be a good balladeer when he released the 1991 "Cry For Help," which reached the top of the charts in both the UK and the US. The same year, he had another major hit in "Whenever You Need Somebody," which sold two million copies.

Before the Big Dome concert, a kick-off party will be held at Hard Rock Makati on July 16. Surprises and prizes await lucky fans.

Call 811-8555.

Nina at the Music Museum

Soul singer Nina shares the stage with bestie Eheng, Jay Durian, Richard Yap and The Sweethearts in the concert "Music Mo!" on Aug. 2 at the Music Museum.

The show features Nina in a repertoire of songs by male artists like Frank Sinatra, Chris Brown, Sam Kingston, Usher and Pie Wo and a Boy Band medley. Sings and TV director Bert de Leon directs.

Call 721-0605.

Simple Plan at the Araneta

Simple Plan, a French-Canadian pop-punk band, is making Manila on Aug. 4 at the Araneta Coliseum.

The band behind the songs "Perfect," "Welcome To My Life" and "Your Love Is A Lie," features guests Jamie Scott & the Town and Sean Pennell Cleary.

It's the second time Simple Plan rocks the Dome.

It's the band's second time to perform in the country, the first back in 2005 with fellow Canadians act Avril Lavigne on her "Bonez Tour."

The band has released two albums—"No Pads, No Helmets... Just Balls" in 2003 and "Still Not Getting Any" in 2004.

Call 687-8181 loc. 4226 and 7310.

CINEMA ACCESS: 635-3555

MOVIEWORLD

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMA MOVIE GUIDE

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

GALLERIA

1 MAMMA MIA	6 WANTED
2 JOURNEY to the CENTER of the EARTH	7 MAMMA MIA
3 MAMMA MIA	8 IndieSine: BARAKO
4 WARLORDS	9 KAMBIYO
5 HANCOCK	10 MY MONSTER MOM

ERMITA

1 WANTED	
2 HANCOCK	6 JOURNEY to the CENTER of the EARTH
3 MAMMA MIA	7 MAMMA MIA
4 WARLORDS	8 KAMBIYO
5 MAMMA MIA	9 MY MONSTER MOM

METRO EAST

1 HANCOCK	6 JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH
2 MAMMA MIA	6 WANTED
3 MAMMA MIA	7 KAMBIYO
4 WARLORDS	8 MY MONSTER MOM

NOVALICHES

1 MAMMA MIA	4 WARLORDS
2 JOURNEY to the CENTER of the EARTH	5 WANTED
3 HANCOCK	6 MY MONSTER MOM

POINEER

1 MAMMA MIA	3 WARLORDS
2 JOURNEY to the CENTER of the EARTH	4 HANCOCK

STA. ROSA

1 WARLORDS	1 MAMMA MIA
2 MAMMA MIA	2 HANCOCK
3 JOURNEY to the CENTER of the EARTH	3 WANTED
4 HANCOCK	4 MY MONSTER MOM
5 WANTED / MY MONSTER MOM	5 GET SMART

LIPA

DASMARINAS

1 MAMMA MIA	
2 JOURNEY to the CENTER of the EARTH	
3 HANCOCK	
4 WARLORDS	

IMUS

1 MAMMA MIA	
2 JOURNEY to the CENTER of the EARTH	
3 WANTED	
4 WARLORDS	
5 HANCOCK	
6 MY MONSTER MOM	

ANGELES

1 MAMMA MIA	3 WANTED
2 HANCOCK	4 MY MONSTER MOM / SUPER HERO

STARMILLS

1 WANTED	4 MY MONSTER MOM
2 HANCOCK	5 ALONE
3 MAMMA MIA	6 SUPER HERO

BACOLOD

1 MAMMA MIA	
2 JOURNEY to the CENTER of the EARTH	
3 WANTED	
4 HANCOCK	
5 SEX AND THE CITY	
6 ALONE	

ILDILO

1 MAMMA MIA	
2 JOURNEY to the CENTER of the EARTH	
3 WANTED	
4 HANCOCK	
5 MY MONSTER MOM	
6 ALONE	

SM CINEMA movietime

visit www.smcinema.com • powered by yahoo!

METRO MANILA

IMAX THEATRE

KUNG FU PANDA
Admission Price: ₱300
1:00 PM | 4:45 PM

DEEP SEA
Admission Price: ₱230
7:00 PM

T-REX
Admission Price: ₱200
9:00 PM

THE PODIUM CINEMAS

MAMMA MIA!

HANCOCK

LATE SCREENINGS

NARNIA PRINCE CASPIAN

CINEMA 1
Admission Price: ₱160

1 WANTED	1 MAMMA MIA!	1 WANTED
2 MAMMA MIA!	2 HANCOCK	2 MAMMA MIA!
3 HANCOCK	3 THE INCREDIBLE HULK	3 HANCOCK
4 THE INCREDIBLE HULK	4 THE WARLORDS	4 THE INCREDIBLE HULK
5 THE WARLORDS	5 WANTED	5 WANTED
6 WANTED	6 GET SMART	6 GET SMART
7 GET SMART	7 KUNG FU PANDA	7 KUNG FU PANDA
8 KUNG FU PANDA	8 MY MONSTER MOM	8 MY MONSTER MOM
9 MY MONSTER MOM	9 MAMMA MIA!	9 THE WARLORDS
10 GET SMART	10 ALONE	10 MY MONSTER MOM
MAMMA MIA!		
WANTED		
KUNG FU PANDA		
RESERVED		

1 HANCOCK	1 MAMMA MIA!	1 HANCOCK
2 WANTED	2 JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH	2 WANTED
3 THE WARLORDS	3 WANTED	3 THE WARLORDS
4 MY MONSTER MOM	4 HANCOCK	4 MY MONSTER MOM
5 MAMMA MIA!	5 THE INCREDIBLE HULK	5 THE INCREDIBLE HULK
6 RESERVED	6 THE WARLORDS	6 RESERVED
7 RESERVED	7 MY MONSTER MOM	7 RESERVED
8 RESERVED	8 KUNG FU PANDA	8 RESERVED
9 RESERVED	9 GET SMART	9 RESERVED
10 RESERVED	10 WANTED	10 MY MONSTER MOM
	11 ALONE	11 KUNG FU PANDA
		12 MAMMA MIA!

1 HANCOCK	1 MAMMA MIA!	SOON TO OPEN
2 THE WARLORDS	2 HANCOCK	
3 MARKUS' PEGASUS HOUSE	3 THE WARLORDS	
4 MAMMA MIA!	4 WANTED	
	5 KUNG FU PANDA	
	6 THE INCREDIBLE HULK	
	7 WANTED	
	8 MAMMA MIA!	
	9 ALONE	

1 HANCOCK	1 MAMMA MIA!	SOON TO OPEN
2 THE WARLORDS	2 HANCOCK	
3 MARKUS' PEGASUS HOUSE	3 THE WARLORDS	
4 MAMMA MIA!		

LUZON

1 MAMMA MIA!	1 MAMMA MIA!	1 HANCOCK
2 WANTED	2 GET SMART	2 MAMMA MIA!
3 HANCOCK	3 HANCOCK	3 HANCOCK
4 THE WARLORDS	4 MAGE OF HONOR	4 WANTED
5 HANCOCK		
6 MY MONSTER MOM		
7 THE HAPPENING		
8 THE INCREDIBLE HULK		
9 MY MONSTER MOM		

1 HANCOCK	1 MAMMA MIA!	1 HANCOCK
2 WANTED	2 MY MONSTER MOM	2 MY MONSTER MOM
3 THE INCREDIBLE HULK	3 HANCOCK	3 THE WARLORDS
4 MAMMA MIA!	4 THE WARLORDS	4 MAMMA MIA!
5 SUPERHERO MOVIE		
6 MY MONSTER MOM		

1 MAMMA MIA!	1 MAMMA MIA!	1 HANCOCK
2 THE WARLORDS	2 MY MONSTER MOM	2 WANTED
3 HANCOCK	3 HANCOCK	3 MAMMA MIA!
4 MY MONSTER MOM		4 MY MONSTER MOM

1 HANCOCK	1 HANCOCK	SOON TO OPEN
2 WANTED	2 MAMMA MIA!	
3 MAMMA MIA!	3 MY MONSTER MOM	
4 MY MONSTER MOM		

VISAYAS • MINDANAO

1 WANTED	1 MAMMA MIA!	1 WANTED
2 THE INCREDIBLE HULK	2 HANCOCK	2 MAMMA MIA!
3 MY MONSTER MOM	3 WANTED	3 HANCOCK
4 THE WARLORDS	4 THE WARLORDS	4 THE WARLORDS
5 HANCOCK	5 MY MONSTER MOM	5 MY MONSTER MOM
6 MAMMA MIA!	6 MAMMA MIA!	6 MAMMA MIA!
7 KUNG FU PANDA	7 KUNG FU PANDA	7 KUNG FU PANDA
8 MAMMA MIA!	8 MAMMA MIA!	8 MAMMA MIA!
9 MAMMA MIA!	9 MAMMA MIA!	9 MAMMA MIA!
10 MAMMA MIA!	10 MAMMA MIA!	10 MAMMA MIA!

1 HANCOCK	1 MAMMA MIA!	1 HANCOCK
2 THE HAPPENING	2 HANCOCK	2 WANTED
3 MAMMA MIA!	3 WANTED	3 MAMMA MIA!
4 HANCOCK	4 HANCOCK	4 MY MONSTER MOM
5 SEX AND THE CITY	5 MY MONSTER MOM	5 THE WARLORDS
6 MAMMA MIA!	6 MAMMA MIA!	6 MAMMA MIA!

1 HANCOCK	1 MAMMA MIA!	SOON TO OPEN
2 THE HAPPENING	2 HANCOCK	
3 MAMMA MIA!	3 WANTED	
4 HANCOCK	4 HANCOCK	
5 SEX AND THE CITY	5 MY MONSTER MOM	
6 ALONE	6 ALONE	

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

One Beatle is all she needs

MOTHER'S DAY: Ringo Starr with wife Barbara Bach

CHICAGO—RINGO STARR HELD A "PEACE and love" fest on a rainy Chicago sidewalk to celebrate his 68th birthday on Monday.

"What could be wrong? Peace and Love.

What a great birthday gift," the former Beatle said. "It's a happening."

The event, which had sparse advance publicity, drew about 200 people on both sides of a street outside the Hard Rock Hotel in Chicago.

Some got close enough to catch a glimpse of Starr, clad in black and wearing purple glasses, with his wife Barbara near by.

Some even snagged one or more of the frosted birthday cupcakes the hotel handed out after he went inside.

"I saw it in the paper, left my sister's house and came down here," said Joyce McDaniels, who was visiting from Wilson, California. She emerged from the crowd holding a slightly mashed chocolate cupcake, but it was a secondary prize.

"I saw a Beatle. That's all I wanted!" she said.

Starr, in the midst of a US concert tour, had announced the event on his Web site, saying he had been asked in a recent interview what he wanted for his birthday and replied "just more peace and love." Reuters

MMTA MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

EIGA SAI 2008

July 9 - 13, 2008
Cinema 3, Shang Cineplex

JULY 9 (WEDNESDAY)
Hanging Garden 2:00pm
Carrie's 4:30pm
A Stranger of Mine 7:00 pm
Juvenile Jungle 9:00 pm

JULY 10 (THURSDAY)
Hanging Garden 2:00pm
Linda Linda Linda 4:30pm
Juvenile Jungle 7:00 pm
A Stranger of Mine 9:30 pm

JULY 11 (FRIDAY)
Carrie's 2:00pm
Hanging Garden 4:30pm
Linda Linda Linda 7:00 pm
We Shall Overcome Someday 9:30 pm

JULY 12 (SATURDAY)
Linda Linda Linda 2:00pm
Carrie's 4:30pm
We Shall Overcome Someday 7:00 pm
A Stranger of Mine 9:30 pm

JULY 13 (SUNDAY)
A Stranger of Mine 2:00pm
We Shall Overcome Someday 4:00pm
Juvenile Jungle 6:30 pm
Linda Linda Linda 8:30 pm

FREE ADMISSION
Tickets are issued two hours before the movie screening.

*Movies and schedule subject to change without prior notice

A DANGEROUS THRILL-PER-MINUTE JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH

Brendan Fraser of "The Mummy" in the year's biggest visual-effects movie "Journey to the Center of the Earth"

Enter a volcanic tube, which bypass the magma layer, and voyage into a dangerous subterranean world via a massive roller coaster. A lost world filled with sea serpents, giant flying piranhas, carnivorous plants, terrifying pterosaurs, and rapidly rising temperature that can kill you in a flash.

Inspired by Jules Verne's controversial 1864 novel – the big budgeted new adaptation of "Journey to the Center of the Earth" starring Brendan Fraser is filmed by Chuck Schuman using the latest HD Fusion Camera developed by Titanic's James Cameron. Images that look so real you can almost touch them!

IS THERE LIFE BENEATH OUR PLANET?

When famous astronomer **Edmond Halley** (to whom a comet was named after) suggested that our planet was hollow and filled with life. His ideas were laughable today, but the truth is, when it comes to the inner Earth, no one knows anything for sure.

Although most geophysicists feel confident that they understand the topography of the inner Earth within a resolution of several hundred miles, it is possible that our assumptions from seismic data could be as inaccurate as were our assumptions about other planets when earthbound telescopes were our only source of observation. "If we have only remote information – the information we get from indirect methods – then we get only part of the picture," says **David Stevenson**, a professor of planetary science at Caltech. ...ar